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PLDT's 6-month profit soars to P12B

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A good cop is (not) hard to find

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Dapat bang ibreksahan ang dami ng unak?

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, August 4, 2004 · A · 24 pages · vol. 77 · no. 220

Gov't agency turns around, admits Metro air polluted

By Christine Cayiban

POLLUTION has worsened in Makati, Quezon City and Valenzuela, contrary to the sweeping statement of the Environment Management Bureau (EMB) last week that the air quality in these Manila was "within acceptable levels."

"Pollutants levels are up in these cities and,

cont. headline in business section

Ex-Abu hostage confirms collusion

MIAS, on apologies for DOJ's glaring misstate that President Arroyo bore shame at the Lodge meeting at the Palace on Tuesday.

Osmeña wants to reopen inquiry

By Fe Zamora
and Christine O. Avendaño

SEE. MAY be a misdemeanor, and a brave one at that, but should her statements be taken as Divine Revelation?

Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago yesterday set the confirmed hostage Sinulu Sawa posed this question yesterday as he reaffirmed his previous testimony to the Senate alleging that there was a conspiracy between some military officers and the Sanlu group.

"Her statements are being treated like Divine Revelation, but what about the statements of the other victims?" Santiago asked in an interview with the Inquirer. "What about those who were killed? What about those who were raped?"

Sinulu was among the witnesses who testified at hearings held by the Senate committees on justice and defense and human rights in 2000 on alleged collusion between some armed forces officers and the Abu Sayyaf.

A Senate report at the time said the two committees found

GMA'S MIC family led by Aurora Tolentino's widow, Constancia, daughter Bernardita and son Arturo Jr. at the Santuario de San Jose Parish Church, Sirawaldik, San Juan. Funeral rites for the man who would be president are scheduled on Saturday.

Palace tells judges: Keep hands off ERC's cases

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG yesterday told judges to keep their hands off the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), which it said was handling intricate power-related issues beyond the expertise of the regular courts.

"While we respect its [judicial court] decision, we also make an appeal to our courts to give the ERC, also an independent body, the benefit of the doubt and allow it to exercise its competence and proficiency in resolving highly complicated and technical power issues," presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said in a briefing yesterday.

Heeding Malacañang's advice

PALACE, A4

'Ka Turing,' veteran lawmaker, dies at 93

By Fe Zamora

DIED OF the last of the Old Guard, Senator Jose Antonio Tolentino, died on Monday night at age 93.

Fondly called "Ka Turing" by friends, the veteran lawmaker, who authored or sponsored some 2,000 bills, notably the Law of the Sea, in a brilliant legislative career, died of a heart attack, his family said.

Tolentino, who had been under medication for the past few years, was taken ill at his house in Quezon City and a doctor keeping a 24-hour watch over him immediately called for help.

The children rushed him to the Makati Medical Center but he did not make it, Atilova son, Antonio Jr., told the Inquirer.

Tolentino died at around 9:30 p.m.

Tolentino's remains lie in state at Santuario de San Jose in Greenhills and President Macapagal-Arroyo was expected to pay her respects last night.

According to civil cremation plans, he will be buried on Saturday at the La Loma Public Cemetery in Kamuning, family members said.

In a will he executed in 1967

TOLENTINO, A4

Candles burn bright for final surgery of RP twins in NY

By Carlo R. Bautista
Pili Hospital Bureau

BAGUIO CITY – For nearly a week, a red candle has been burning on the family altar of a small house in a remote village of this City in Negros Occidental.

"That light is like our hope that nothing dies," Rodrigo Aguirre, 55, had said.

Halfway around the world, her grandchildren, Carl and Clarence, the 2-year old conjoined twins, are set to undergo an 18-hour-long [Thursday in Manila] their fourth — possibly fi-

CANDLES, A14

2 more JI suspects behind LRT bombings arrested

By TJ Burgonio

TWO SUSPECTED local operatives of the regional terrorist group Jemaah Islamiya (JI) have been arrested in Central Mindanao in connection with the commuter train terror attack that killed 22 people and wounded 100 in Metro Manila four years ago.

The military yesterday reported the arrest of Mamasa Hagas and Abdul Pata as the Philippine National Police assisted the police that the country was safe from a terrorist at the following the most specific terrorism warnings in the United States since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

Lt. Cmdr. Earl Ivan Abalan, acting military information officer, said Hagas and Pata were captured by members of the Army intelligence group and the 7th Marine Landing Battalion around 11 a.m. Monday at Barangay Libid, in Butuan City.

Abalan said a Butuan police and several documents detailing JI links in the country were seized from Hagas, alias Zainal Pala, and Nita, alias Mohaimal Sani.

Hagas and Pata are among at least 10 people facing charges of multiple murder, multiple frustrated murder and multiple attempted murder in connection with Nov. 30, 2000 bombings in Metro Manila.

Warrants for their arrest had been issued by the Manila Regional Trial Court, which is hearing the case.

LRT BOMBINGS, A14

Erap Swiss trip OK for Malacañang

By Armand Nocum
and Juliet L. Javellana

MALACAÑANG is more than confident the prospect of ousted President Joseph Estrada flying to Bern, Switzerland, for medical treatment.

"If and when this request is granted, there should be no objection and we should be happy for [him]," Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said yesterday in a press briefing.

ERAP, A4

At 19, Fil-Am youngest Harvard law grad, a magna

By Cristina DC Pastor
Contributor

NEW YORK—It was reading serious government books at 3, emerging as a conversation about Warren Buffet's stock picks at 6, and [last] written a paper on alternative investments for thousand-and-ones by the time he was 11.

He finished an undergraduate course in computer science and mathematics at 16.

Last June, at age 19, he earned his doctorate in law—magna cum laude, making him possibly the youngest graduate in Harvard Law School history.

Philippine-born Emil Alejandro Guman Camara, who turned 20 on June 16, has a life [running on fast forward] and he is enjoying the ride enormously.

"[Emil] don't feel I'm different," Emil told the Inquirer in a phone interview. "I'm just a regular guy."

While savoring results of the bar exams he took last week, Emil is winding down his research for the Harvard center of the John M. Olin fellowship in Law and Economics, and Berkman Center for Internet and Society.

"PRANCING somewhere outside pursuit," Camara calls his ballroom dancing expertise. He was with the Harvard-Radcliffe Ballroom Dance Team.

MEET Emil Alejandro Camara, who made history in Harvard Law School.

A1
WEATHER FORECAST
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2004
Second FRONTPAGE

Gov't to give out P15B to save P7B each year

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE GOVERNMENT is giving P15 billion "incentive" for government employees who would opt to be "voluntarily separated" from government service so that it could save up to P7 billion in salaries every year, Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said yesterday.

Stressing that separation from government service would be voluntary, Boncodin said as many as 40,000 government employees could avail of the incentive that would be on top of the regular retirement benefits.

Boncodin formally presented President Macapagal-Arroyo's "government rationalization program" in yesterday's meeting of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council, to seek congressional support for the re-engineering bill.

Boncodin stressed that early retirement or separation of government employees would be voluntary but she reiterated that as many as 40,000 government workers could opt for separation and avail themselves of the incentive package.

Boncodin said the government bureaucracy is composed of 1.4 million employees, 1.1 million of whom are employed by the national government including 100,000 public school teachers and 200,000 police and military personnel.

Boncodin said that since the government was not getting its wife's leaders and is in fact going to increase the number of law enforcers, the re-engineering could only affect 200,000 government employees.

"So you're really talking of 300,000 civil servants. This is going to be the base of the re-engineering effort," she said.

Boncodin was excited to give an estimate of how many employees would be affected, saying, "It's difficult to say because it's voluntary."

But she retorted, "If you can just save maybe 20 percent of 300,000 employees, that I think would be good enough," she said.

But Boncodin said the figures could change.

"The margin could be very wide. But if you say 10 percent, that would be about 15,000 to 30,000 (employees) but it could lower and it could be more. It's a wide range, it could be between 15,000 to 40,000," she said.

Boncodin said the government has allocated P15 billion in the rationalized 2004 budget for the incentive pay and would include it again in the proposed 2005 budget.

Ms Arroyo has dubbed it the "government re-engineering with other measures."

Boncodin said the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program, the European Commission, Canada, Australia and New Zealand were even willing to bankroll the rationalization program.

Boncodin said the details of the incentive package are still being discussed but she said it could be more than the amount of the regular retirement pay.

But Boncodin said: "It is a voluntary separation scheme... therefore it is not a mass layoff, neither is it a forced retirement of employees in the public service."

"An employee working in a government unit whose function are deemed abolished or are duplicating will be given the opportunity to either voluntarily retire or to remain in government service," she said.

She said those who opt to stay would be included in a pool of government employees who will be under the direct supervision of the Civil Service Commission. She said the CSC would "re-deploy" the employees to agencies that require additional manpower.

Boncodin said those who opt to stay in government service would not suffer a pay cut and would not be "punished" by being deployed to far off areas.

She said the rationalization program was being implemented to cut costs and make the government more efficient and effective.

"It is essentially a program to ensure that government delivers the services more effectively and more efficiently," she said.

Ninoy killers' bid for release rejected by SC

By Philip C. Tubeza

LESS than three weeks before the 21st anniversary of the assassination of opposition leader Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., the Supreme Court yesterday denied for lack of merit the convicted killers' petition to be freed.

The SC rejected the petitions of convicts Cpt. Romeo Buenaventura and Sgt. Arsenio Ayson, who asked the court to order their release and 24 other Aviation Security Command (Aviscom) members who were convicted for the killing in 1983 of Aquino and Rolando Galman, the man that the military had trapped as the assassin.

In their petition, Buenaventura claimed that they were already qualified for parole since they had served the minimum of their required prison terms and have maintained a good record while in jail.

They also cited a memo of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. in April which directed all trial judges nationwide to immediately release prisoners whose cases have been dismissed.

The Sandiganbayan sentenced the convicts to double life sentences in 1990. As of 2000, they had served a total of 38 years in prison, including the time they were detained during their trial.

But senior state prosecutor Teresa Lagunga, chair of the Board of Pardons and Parole, explained that under the law, prisoners sentenced to death or reclusion perpetua cannot be paroled unless their sentences are commuted to lesser ones.

Even good conduct while in prison has no effect unless the sentences of reclusion perpetua is commuted, she said.

Besides Buenaventura and Ayson, the other convicts in the double murder case who are still detained at the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa are: Sgts. Pablito Martinez, Ramon Dasalang, Ernesto Mateo, Rolando de Guzman, Rolino Aquino and Hilarado Tamon; and S/Cpl. Cambrea Gerba.

Also detained are the members of the boarding party which took Aquino out of the plane—2nd Lt. Jesus Castro, Sgts. Claro Luz and Arnulfo de Mesa, T/Sgt. Filomeno Miranda, Corporals Jose Miguel Galapo and CIC Rogelio Moreno.

Former prosecution chief Brig. Gen. Luther Custodio was also convicted but died of cancer in prison.

Last year, the Aquino family and defendant Aquino's family became embroiled in a public word war over efforts by the family not to object to their petition to have their double life sentences commuted. The police board normally takes into consideration the opinion of the family of the victim in such cases.

Bayan Mag. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, the son of Senator Aquino's son, said the convicts should first admit to killing his father.

"He said there has not been any, even one, soldier who has dared to tell us what they have done and their remorse," the congressman said.

The Aquino administration ignored the lament of protest that led to the downfall of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and propelled Aquino's widow, Corazon, to the presidency.

Group demands audit of RP debt

By Veit Corrinez

WITH the government's total debt now at P5.39 trillion and growing, a financial watchdog and several lawmakers yesterday demanded an "audit" revealing how these loans had piled up through the years and whether the money really served public rather than private interests.

Noting that borrowings under the Arroyo administration had already exceeded those individually made by the Aquino, Ramos and Estrada presidencies, the Freedom from Debt Coalition said "critical questions" should be asked on where the money went.

"It's time go beyond financial statistics," said FDC president Aya Maita Nemenzo in a press forum in Quezon City. "Were the funds actually spent for the intended purposes? What were the terms and conditions accompanying these loans?"

Nemenzo said a review should be set on planning how these loans—and the astronomic debt payments the latter the government incurs each assigned each year...have impacted on the lives of ordinary Filipinos.

'I HAVE LEGS'

Bionic boy eager to start normal life

By Cliza A. Fuentes
ITH Harper Bureau

BALLAYOH, Bohol—A day after coming home from a 46-day trip to Australia, Jayel Amoro is eager to begin life anew, as a normal 5-year-old boy.

Hours in a modest one-story bungalow in Nueva Tabing, Barangay Lays, mostly 2 km upland from the town proper.

Except for a brief moment when he beamed proudly upon seeing his picture on the local-news front page on Monday, Jayel was completely engrossed in child play—like any ordinary boy his age, but he is not just like any other, for he was born without legs and subsequently a right arm.

"The first thing that he told me when they arrived was 'Mama, marun na akong paa!' (Mother, I have legs!)," said his mother Trinidad, 34.

She later explained that the boy picked a few Filipino phrases and words when he and his father Joel visited in the home of an Australian-Filipino family shortly after their arrival on June 16.

Jayel was fitted with new legs and an arm, mainly through the efforts of Danny Genna, a farmer and part-time preacher for the New Zealand-Anglican Church.

Genna, a friend of Philippine ex-Ambassador Claudio Boholst, spearheaded the boy's trip to Australia, after the boy whom he visited failed to baptize her last year.

15-year commitment

Joel, 41, a brother-in-law of Genna, said the image of Jayel gamely riding on a skateboard greeted us Genna more than enough for him to make a "15-year commitment" to help the boy.

Genna spread the word about Jayel when he returned to his country. Donors and benefactors in neighboring Australia responded to the call for help.

In March, Genna told the Amoros that two prosthetic experts, directors Rudi Dalley and Eugenia Beams of the Appliance and Limb Center in Sydney had offered their products and services for free.

These would cost from A$10,000 to A$15,000 (P390,000 to P585,000), an amount too high for the meager income of Joel, a hospital clerk, and Trinidad, a fish vendor, who also have four other children to take care of.

Emerging as a unique power boy of Filipino-Australian relation, Jayel became a media sensation in Australia when he was prominently featured in various media organizations.

Instant celebs

Upon arrival at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Saturday after the nine-hour flight from Sydney, Jayel and his father became instant celebrities. But the child seemed oblivious to all the attention when the locale visited him at their home on Monday afternoon.

With two playmates and a preschool sister, Jayel was completely preoccupied while scrambling undisturbed logs blocks. "Naglaro ng sombahan (Building a church)," he explained, his current learning his toys on the spoke.

For a few moments later, the focus on the activity wound and Jayel was one of the house with his playmates. Although still adjusting to his new "feet," the boy had adroit with the other children.

To find, his son's preschool question when he turns five on Dec. 11 is one to his mom.

Before leaving for Australia,

Joel had doubted to buy a wheelchair for his son. He acknowledged how inconvenient it would be when it was time for his son to go to school given his limitations.

"I was set to quit my job as I can personally look after him," he revealed.

Joel said the thought of sacrificing that much for his son must have troubled Jamie a lot because he did not rest until he was able to generate the kind of response he eventually got in Australia.

Adjustments

Still, Joel knew that his son would still need his presence during the initial days at school, particularly because his classmates would need to adjust to his condition.

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Boy Joel is confident that his boy would eventually be able to find his way by himself. Joel, he said, "is determined. When he wants something, he won't quit until he gets it."

Before the interview would get any further, Jayel suddenly approached his father and tugged his arm, a new interest fighting up his feet.

Rich parents smiled apologetically as they boy keeps pulling his father while only mumbling a few words.

"He said he wants us to go to the mall," Joel said.

Smiling triumphantly as his father rose to his feet, Jamie bolted out of the house, barely showing any effects of the artificial legs as he did. His mind was fixed up at the mere anticipation of the trip to the mall, just like any ordinary boy.

JUBILANTA: Child's play

Unicef expresses alarm over child porn in RP

THE United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) yesterday expressed alarm over the growing incidence of child pornography in the Philippines and appealed to the state to do more to protect the "vulnerable" of children.

"The United Nations Children's Fund is outraged that children in the Philippines are being used in pornography. Child pornography is a gross violation of children's rights," said Dr. Nicholas Alipui, the Unicef country representative in Manila.

The Unicef commissioned a study on child pornography to determine the extent of the problem.

"Results so far show that child pornography in the Philippines is more widespread than previously thought," the UN agency said in a statement.

Alipui noted that the rescue of the 75 children, aged 5 to 12, who were rescued from a pornography ring in Laguna early last month "showed the seriousness of the problem.

Unicef said that widespread poverty and weaknesses of prosecution were just some of the factors that contribute to the proliferation of child pornography in the Philippines.

Other factors include the country's sex tourism, the availability of advanced communication technology, lack of stringent laws against child pornography and inefficient prosecution of perpetrators.

The study said that the opportunity to distribute and propagate pornographic materials are "boundless" as technological advances have made it possible for pornographers to produce and disseminate pornographic images of children.

"Internet pornography sites and chat rooms, digital cameras and cellular phones have facilitated the production and distribution of pornographic images," the Unicef report said.

Alipui also urged the media to stop "the sensationalization and eroticization" of children.

"Any form of child pornography is simply not acceptable. We must all work together to put a stop to it," he said.

The Unicef report said that the 75 children who were rescued were just a "minority" of the victims as "many other children victimized in pornography are never rescued."

Alipui reminded Philippine authorities of their obligations under international and national laws to protect children from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Alipui cited the laws, like the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which seek to protect children from being forced to engage in any unlawful sexual activity, prostitution and any pornographic performance.

There's also the "Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography" which calls on governments to ensure that adults involved in child exploitation are punished, he said.

The Philippines ratified the latter convention in 2002.

TJ Burgonio and Marvin Marcelo

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As expected, Church bucks birth control

THE CATHOLIC Church yesterday unveiled attempts by some legislators to promote family planning, saying the clergy would campaign against them for pushing birth control.

Archbishop Oscar Cruz, head of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) committee on marriage, said one of the church's opposition to artificial contraception.

Cruz said the bishops would meet with members of Congress to convince them to defeat bills promoting family planning while urging the public not to vote for legislators who are promoting the bill. AFP

'Ka Turing,' veteran lawmaker, dies at 93

Turingan A2

and kept in a sealed envelope. Teodoro specified that his possessions "must be equally divided" among his seven children, Arturo Jr. said.

Teodoro had three children—Arturo Jr., Evelyn and Amabelle—with his first wife, Consuelo Ortiz, Arturo Jr. said.

He said his father also had three children—Bernadette, Gabrielle and Vic Arturo—with his second wife, Concepcion Conde.

He had a daughter, Glenda, with his third wife, Benita Bolbes.

He refused hearing aids

Always health conscious, Teodoro lived on a diet of fish and vegetable, avoiding pork and eggs in his last years. He also tried to keep himself fit by doing breathing exercises.

His children tried to give him the most expensive hearing aids they could get for him "but he refused to use them," Arturo Jr. said.

Still, he maintained communication with his family through letters, delivered by couriers, or by fax.

The Senate ran closer to session yesterday after passing a resolution expressing profound sadness.

'Ka Turing,' to friends

"On behalf of the government and the entire nation, we would like to express our sense of deep loss on the demise of former Sen. Arturo Teodoro," Ms Arroyo said in a statement.

She also called Ka Turing by colleagues and friends, Teodoro was a statesman, scholar, writer and diplomat ... Up in the time of his death, Teodoro continued to express his resolute views on issues confronting the country."

Ka Turing had undergone surgery, Ms Arroyo added.

Foreign Secretary Delia Albert sent her condolences in a letter to the late senator's wife, Constancia Teodoro.

Albert also ordered Philippine diplomatic posts around the world to open condolence books.

Teodoro served as foreign

With the world was young and Sen. Arturo Teodoro (extreme left) was in his prime along with President Marcos, Vice President Fernando Lopez, Senators Gil Puyat (behind Marcos) and Jose Diokno (extreme right).

ministers from 1984 to 1985.

Flags flew at half-staff around Manila yesterday afternoon.

The Senate tentatively scheduled necrological rites for Thursday.

A memorial ceremony on the Constitution, a respected lawyer and a diplomat, Teodoro also had a brief fling with the presidency.

In the summer of 1969, months after the divisive Ferdinand Marcos was forced to face reelection by the "people power" vote, Teodoro was proclaimed acting president by hundreds of Marcos loyalists, including solons, who had barricaded themselves in the Manila Hotel to install a rebel government.

Ironic twist

Minus the massive popular support the rebels were expecting failed to materialize, Teodoro agreed to disperse his followers. Then Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel V. Ramos pocketed the mutinous troops by ordering them to do "push-ups."

The Manila Hotel coup gave an ironic twist to the political career of the former bar topnotcher who first joined public service as a congressman in 1947.

A stalwart in the Nacionalista Party Teodoros—along with Jovito Salonga, such as their Vice Presidential running mates, and Senators Fernando Lopez and Gil Puyat—was a strong contender for the party's nomination as standard-bearer in the 1965 presidential election.

Teodoro's presidential hopes faded when a clique unified themselves behind the Liberal Party and joined the 65.

Marcos scored the 1969 reelection from the original 65% and went on to challenge and defeat his former LP party mate, incumbent President Ferdinand Marcos, in the election.

A year before that, in 1964, Teodoro filed an impeachment case against President Macapagal.

"After the impeachment case up for decision, the House voted against it," Macapagal wrote in his memoirs, "A house for the Edifice."

After Marcos declared martial law in 1972 and eventually set up the ruling Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL) party Teodoros, like most politicians, jumped to the KBL wagon.

Objections to brevida

But in 1978, when Marcos urged the KBL to gain a resolution urging him to name his wife, Imelda Marcos, as deputy prime minister, two KBL luminaries strongly objected, saying the Marcos move was paving the way for Imelda's rise to the highest office in the land.

The two KBL members were Arturo Teodoros and Salvador Laurel.

In 1986, in opposition to his regime successor, Marcos asked Teodoros to be his running mate in the snap polls that pitted the dictator against the usurper, Cory Aquino.

Teodoros ran against his former ally, Salvador Laurel.

Shortest-serving veep

The oldest surviving Runaway Presidents proclaimed Marcos and Teodoros winners of the snap polls.

On Feb. 16 that year, Teodoros took his oath as Vice President to Malacañang before Chief Justice Enrique Fernando. He would later write: "With my oath of office before the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, I had qualified and become the full-fledged Vice President of the Republic of the Philippines on 9th, 16, 1986, the first time martial law was declared in 1972."

According to the Office of the Vice President's website, Teodoros is regarded as the country's de facto Vice President for nine days in the tumultuous period in February 1986.

The 1973 Constitution promulgated by Marcos during martial law did not provide for a vice president.

In 1986, the Office of the Vice President was restored through a constitutional amendment.

Teodoros, however, would not have an opportunity to exercise any powers under the power and authority of the Vice President. The popular belief was that the elections were rigged.

Within a week after Teodoros's oath, the Filipinos rose in indignation and staged a "people power" revolution that brought down the Marcos regime.

Senators' eulogy

Senators called Teodoros the "resilient, untroubled soul" and hailed him as one of the country's best legal and political minds.

In Senate Resolution No. 79, they praised him for being an "outstanding and brilliant statesman, legal luminary, parliamentarian, scholar, diplomat, law professor, renowned author and public servant."

The resolution noted that Teodoros, who was elected to the Senate for three consecutive terms (1957-1972), had authored and co-authored landmark legislation.

These included Republic Act No. 2370, or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act; Republic Act No. 1079 providing that civil service eligibility shall be permanent, and the law regulating the practice of optometry.

Teodoros served as the 20th Senate President during the fourth Congress covering the period 1966 to 1967.

"Turing Teodoros was not only brilliant, he was also a man of integrity and principles," Senate President Franklin Drilon said.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon recalled that when he filed a bill years ago calling to require all candidates for elected positions to undergo psychiatric tests, it was the former Senate President who told him that he once would be unconstitutional.

Biggest legacy

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said Teodoros's biggest legacy was his authorship of the Law of the Sea.

Pimentel said this law had become the "international guidelines for the use and protection of the continental shelf demarcation of nations."

"The Philippines had benefited much from the law, being an archipelago, Pimentel added.

Sen. Edgardo Angara considered Teodoros to be one of the best civil law experts of the country and "probably the most intellectual Filipino of his generation."

He said Teodoros should have been a president of the country.

"The stars were so quiet. He sat down under the moon, he swam, everyone likened," Angara added.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. hailed Teodoros as the "embodiment of active statesman."

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, a passing, Manila Mayor Jose L. Atienza Jr. ordered all city government offices and public schools to fly their flags at half mast.

"We join the nation in the loss of one of the greatest and most illustrious Manila has ever had," said Atienza.

Godmother

Teodoros's wife, Constancia, is the godmother of Atienza's first child, former Manila Councilor Rizal Atienza, now 37.

"Our families were always on the opposite sides of the political fence. But as a colleague, he was tarheels," said Atienza, who has been a Liberal Party member since he entered politics in 1988.

Atienza's father, Jose Leido Sr., was the governor of Albay province when Teodoros was elected senator in 1957.

Manila's mayor lauded its reputation as "a man of the people."

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"We join the nation in the loss of one of the greatest and most illustrious Manila has ever had," said Atienza.

Godmother

Teodoros's wife, Constancia, is the godmother of Atienza's first child, former Manila Councilor Rizal Atienza, now 37.

"Our families were always on the opposite sides of the political fence. But as a colleague, he was tarheels," said Atienza, who has been a Liberal Party member since he entered politics in 1988.

Atienza's father, Jose Leido Sr., was the governor of Albay province when Teodoros was elected senator in 1957.

Manila's mayor lauded its reputation as "a man of the people."

Erap Swiss trip OK for Malacanang

Turingan A2

"[But] this is letter addressed to the board of directors of the [Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center] Mr Arroyo's "personal stand."

But government lawyers are up in arms.

Timing 'suspicious'

Special Prosecutor Bernie Villalon said he suspected that Estrada could be out to seek political asylum, instead of treatment for arthritis knee and back problems.

In a telephone interview, Villalon said the timing was suspicious at best.

"[If] Justice Fernando Diaz Jr., defeated presidential candidate, asks his hard case, he was hoping for a political solution to a legal problem," the lawyer said. "This is his full back position."

Estrada is being detained pending resolution of plunder and perjury charges. The country has an extradition agreement with Switzerland, unlike the United States, where the anti-graft court, in December, allowed Ilet on President to go.

The Sandiganbayan justices were made the trip, at one point admitting he wanted to help Pier win the election. He also claimed he had difficulty obtaining a US visa and running more than $1 million, the charges set by American surgeon Christopher Moss.

No way out

Villa-Ignacio noted that European countries like Switzerland were "liberal" when granting political asylum to illegal aliens fleeing of states or suspected communist revolutionaries, like Jean Ric. Bertrand Aristide of Haiti.

But in a statement, the former President's personal lawyer Salvador Panelo, nominated Justice Secretary Simeon "Sonny" Datumanong to defend himself before a "fair and impartial" court.

Chocolates

"It is therefore Estrada who is asserting the government guarantees that he should be allowed to return home once he finished his medical treatment," Panelo said.

But Villa-Ignacio wondered: Hasn't Switzerland better known for Rolex watches, chocolates and its banking system than for unrelated facilities? "Maybe he will go there to update his Rolex or cancel investments?"

Estrada is accused of acquiring P4.1 billion in cash and securities during his three years in office.

Of late, Mr Arroyo has adopted a policy of compassion for the man she succeeded in office following an uprising that left some dead and many poor Filipinos are in Estrada's condition as some celebrate mass suffrage. So, of course, she did not create many problems.

Palace tells judges: Keep hands off ERC's technical power-related cases

Turingan A2

may not necessarily be in the interest of consumers, Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), the country's biggest power distributor, has been forced to refund its customers about P30 billion after the Supreme Court ruled that it overcharged its customers between 1994 and April 2003.

Last week, the Court of Appeals ordered the ERC to review the petition of Meralco for a 17 centavos per kilowatt-hour rate hike that the regulator approved last year.

The court said the ERC had "grossly erred" in approving the rate increase without going through the financial records of Meralco. The court remanded the case to the ERC and ordered the Commissioners to do so over the books of Meralco.

No more delays

"We cannot afford more delays," Romulo said. "We have to work double time to put in place the necessary structural reforms by attracting investments in the power sector so that every household and industry could enjoy sufficient and reliable electricity today and tomorrow."

But while Malacañang sees the court's decision as unclear intervention in the ERC's regulatory work, consumer groups have hailed the court ruling as a victory for Meralco's customers because it prevented what they perceived as a railroading of the power rate increase.

Romulo said there a statement prepared by Energy Secretary Vicente Perez Jr. that said, "was clothed with sufficient authority to act on matters related to the energy sector."

Malacañang has apparently sided with the position of Meralco for a rate increase although President Arroyo's Energy Action Plan made the reduction of electricity rates one of her main objectives in the next six years.

Explain oil price increases

Malacañang is also perceived to be siding with oil companies following a deputy presidential spokesperson's statement that a committee watching monitoring oil prices "will be ready to engaged in "guesswork."

Malacañang yesterday said it would require oil companies to first defend their proposed price increases before adjusting their fuel pump rates.

"We just were taking steps to cushion the oil price hikes such as asking oil companies to justify the computation of the proposed price hikes," Romulo said.

Deregulated

But he did not explain how the government would compel oil companies to justify their price increases considering that the oil industry has been deregulated.

The Palace apparently has heard the appeal of consumers for the government to stop the indiscriminate increase in oil prices.

Consumer groups have complained that oil companies are too quick in raising oil prices when world crude oil prices show signs of no slow in reducing prices when the world market stabilizes.

Tighter price watch

Aside from demanding an explanation from oil companies, Romulo said the government would further tighten its price watch on basic goods to counteract the effects of the recent upsurge of the oil price increases by indiscriminately jacking up prices.

Romulo said Mr Arroyo had left it to the Department of Energy to decide on a proposal by Senate President Franklin Drilon for the government to buy fuels consisted of Petron Corp. from Saudi Aramco.

Gov't agency turns around, admits Metro air polluted

Turingan A2

disorders, unhealthy and could cause respiratory illnesses," DENR engineer Cesar Saulog said as a panelist in the hearing.

But data furnished the media at the briefing showed that Manila, Mandaluyong, Pasig and Pasay—four cities that form part of the metropolis—passed the acceptable total suspended particulate (TSP) level of 230 per microgram. TSP is a measure of pollution.

The DENR made the turnaround after concerned residents of the metropolis and the media, including the reporter, challenged the findings contained in a press release Secretary Gozun issued last June 27.

"The quality of air we breathe in Metro Manila and some parts of adjacent provinces is within the policy standards that safeguards human health and the environment," read the DENR statement.

Gozun orders review

Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun has instructed the DENR to review its report, saying that the data released earlier did not include the results of the manually monitored air quality in for spots like Elliptical Avenue and Taft Avenue.

"Admittedly, this fact should have been emphasized in the press release. Secretary Gozun urged all DENR Department of Environment and Natural Resources) officials to carefully present all facts, including limitations where they have official reports about the environment, in order to avoid misinterpretation," a DENR statement said.

The DENR, which is headed by Julian Amador, is an agency under the DENR.

Gozun said the DMS report released last week cited the "data from eight monitoring stations for the ambient air in the studied, which measures many pollutants but not total suspended particles."

Exceeds acceptable levels

Slashy who was the only DMS official present at the press briefing, said Makati, Quezon City and Valenzuela failed the DMS monthly air quality monitoring in July.

The data the DMS presented yesterday showed that ambient air quality over Makati, Quezon City and Valenzuela exceeded the acceptable level of 230 TSP micrograms.

Slashy said the results were based on data gathered from eight new air quality monitoring stations across Manila.

Hot spots

Slashy noted that these cities were to be considered "hot spots" and that intense rules and monitoring for vehicle smoke-belchers and industrial fumes should be imposed.

In Makati City the TSP was 279. On Congressional Avenue in Quezon City the TSP was 250 and on Valenzuela it was 268. The acceptable TSP level is 230.

Aside from the huge volume of traffic plying these cities (at least 15,000 vehicles), factories have also contributed to the pollution, according to Slashy.

The vehicles also has a significant impact on the levels of pollution in urban areas, according to Slashy.

"The monsoon rains definitely drain our air. The humid weather reduces a dirtier air," he noted.

Slashy's team based its reports on the monthly data collected by the ambient air quality monitoring stations placed in specific locations within Metro Manila and some parts of Regions 3 and 4.

For more accurate data

He said there should be additional monitoring stations for a more accurate data but at least P100 million would have to be acquired.

The existing eight monitoring stations were put up through a loan from the Asian Development Bank. The stations are located in Ateneo-Katipunan, Fort Bonifacio, PGH-Sta. Mesa, Valenzuela, Cuartro, Los Baños, Batangas and Ortigas Economic Zone.

Chained like an animal, girl, 14, sues parents

By Carla P Gomez
INQ Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—A 14-year-old girl from Don Salvador Benedicto town here is suing her parents for treating her "like an animal" and leaving her chained to a post for a year.

Maria (not her real name) fled her home in Purok Ilihan, Barangay Bango a week ago and alerted police to her plight.

Her right ankle was scarred and officers from a 1.2-meter metal chain and combat boots workers said.

Maria told reporters her parents had chained her up for more than a year for playing truant and to prevent her from spending time with boys.

The girl, accompanied by police and provincial authorities held a confrontation with her parents at the municipal hall on Monday.

Her 54-year-old father, Ibrahim Li-Imanky, said he was better to those his children than to keep beating him up. That would be more painful for both her and as parents."

Her mother begged her for forgiveness, telling her that sending them to jail, as the girl wanted, would be "like killing us and your brothers and sisters."

Treated like an animal

Maria, who spoke to reporters with her face covered by a towel, said she could not forgive her parents for "treating me like an animal."

Maria, who is under the custody of the municipal social welfare and development office (MSWDO), amends to the charges against her parents for violating Republic Act 7610, or the Child Abuse Law.

Physical injury with illegal detention is punishable by life imprisonment or death.

Maria said she was placed in a corner and fed like a dog, while a long metal chain was attached to her right foot.

Her mother, three sisters and a brother cared and pleaded with her but she turned down their appeals to talk to them.

The father explained that he only wanted to stop his daughter skipping classes at the Bango Elementary School and truant her to keep away from boys.

He said he had reportedly warned her to avoid boys and focus on her studies but she would not obey.

He said he decided to put his daughter in chains because he was afraid she would become pregnant, or end up being raped or killed like a woman from a neighboring village.

The mother said it was painful for her to see her daughter chained but it was for Maria's own good.

She said she knew that beating her was a violation of the law but getting her attention was not.

Maria claimed she stopped going to school last year when she was in fifth grade because her parents prevented her from doing so.

She said that of her 10 siblings, she was the only one being maltreated.

She has four half-siblings from her mother's first marriage and 13 with her mother.

Maria said she first left home in 2002 because she said she could no longer bear the treatment she was receiving from her mother who would allegedly hang her head on the wall or punch and push her every time she made a mistake.

Shaved

But her father forced her the next day and took her back. He then beat her and shaved her hair.

She said her mother arranged to get her out in June 2003. The time her father chained her. He also threatened to bury her alive if she tried to flee from her.

She said her mother did nothing to defend her. The mother once agreed with her father's idea of chaining her, she said.

Maria even beat recently as she sought help with the household chores but the chain also remained unbroken.

At about noon of July 15, Maria escaped and asked to get some payment.

Holding her chains, the girl ran until she reached a town hall where she asked for shelter. The town hall where she stayed for two days and two nights. She survived by eating wild bananas.

She left the city and walked until she reached a house where she stayed for one night.

Early on July 17, she started walking until she reached a house in Barangay Quezon, San Carlos City where she stayed for another two days and two nights.

Emotionally strong

The owners of the house took pity on her and informed barangay councilor Johnny Robles about her. She was immediately referred to the MSWDO and the police. The report was sent to the office of Mayor Cipriano de la Cruz.

Milagros de los Reyes of the MSWDO said the girl was now undergoing psychiatric testing to determine the psychological effects of her experience.

She said Maria was very strong emotionally and resilient but she has developed a hatred for her parents.

TOURISM Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan with Ligo ng mga Barangay president James Marty Lim: Developing a "culture of tourism."

Tourism goes grassroots

THE DEPARTMENT of Tourism (DOT) has tapped the barangays to push its "Ganda ng Pilipinas, Galing ng Pilipino" (GPGP) Project at grassroots level.

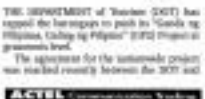
The agreement for the nationwide project was reached recently between the DOT and the Liga ng mga Barangay sa Pilipinas through its television program "Barangay Mo!" which was launched at the Pasticon Leisure Parks Convention Center in Clark, Pampanga.

The GPGP Project outreach the barangay officials and all barangay residents on how to promote tourism at their level via an extensive information campaign. Tourism Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan said it is the expressed of the DOT's mission for the country to become the premiere Asian destination.

It's key strategy is to promote the "Culture of Tourism" to every Filipino, he added. The DOT and the Liga aim to cultivate this culture at the barangay level.

"The attitude changing the mind-set of how the common people perceive and receive tourists," Liga ng mga Barangay president James Marty Lim noted.

The DOT has also tied up with the Department of Interior and Local Government, the Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education and the Philippine Information Agency for project. A nonlive campaign has already been launched at all international ports of entry for all branches.



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TIT FOR TAT

Chavez hits back at Mike A

By Tarra V. Quismundo

ill will not be drained by a lawsuit, said defeated senatorial candidate Frank Chavez who filed perjury charges against First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo at the Manila prosecutors office yesterday as the three-year deadline to file election offense cases drew nearer.

"It cannot cow people into submission by threatening them with libel suits. The question is, if a person has himself badly damaged his reputation, would he blame it on others? Since he lose the personality to sue he libel?" said Chavez, a former solicitor general.

Chavez, who ran for senator under the Alyansa ng Pag-asa party of former Education Secretary Raul Roco, said he was filing the charges to counter attempts against for the libel suit the latter had filed against Chavez.

Arroyo's suit against Chavez stemmed from the latter's statements that were published in the Inquirer on May 16, 2004.

In the front page story titled "Davao names 4 hunters," Chavez alleged that Arroyo had a supposed "big haul" in the agriculture department when job was informed P726 million in government funds into the campaign of his wife, President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Chavez said Arroyo's several denials contained in his libel suit were "brazen lies."

Chavez claimed to have witnesses from Binalonan, Bolinao, who alleged that Arroyo had been in the province a few days before the May 10 election.

"We have affidavits saying that on May 7, Mike Arroyo, flew in by chopper with (Bolinao representative) Miguel Zubiri, and openly campaigned before barangay and municipal officials providing P1 million worth of projects per barangay, provided that they vote for his wife, and straight for the (Lakas-Kampi) ticket," he said.

In his libel suit, Arroyo denied having any connections in the agriculture department. Chavez said the First Gentleman was "good friends" with Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante, and even allegedly "pushed for (Bolante's) appointment."

Chavez also countered Arroyo's statements that he "always abstained even the slightest hint of involvement in government affairs."

"Remember the Pagcor (the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.) celebration of his birthday? What the hell was it doing there at the party of Miguel Arroyo, inviting 1,700 guests. At P1,000 per plate, how much was that? Who paid for the party?" said Chavez.

Chavez was among the respondents in the five separate libel suits that Arroyo filed on June 4.

Arroyo also sued Senator Senator Francisco Tatad, Lito Banayo, the publisher of Sen. Panfilo Lacson; all the editorial staff and reporters of Newsbreak magazine and the Malaya newspaper for publishing allegedly malicious stories and columns accusing him of corruption and election fraud.

Arroyo filed another libel suit against Tatad and the editorial staff of the Daily Tribune on June 8 for statements alleging Arroyo's involvement in election rigging.

On Monday, Arroyo filed two more libel suits against Chavez and Sen. Gregorio Honasan for "grave threats" and criminal conspiracy in connection with the alleged "tokhang" operations.

NFA chief elated by anti-graft clearance

NATIONAL Food Authority (NFA) chief incoming agriculture secretary Arthur Yap yesterday said he was particularly thankful to Justice Secretary Ignacio Bunye, who was assigned at the Department of Agriculture and NFA.

The PAGC directed Yap along with Bunye, Presidential Anti-Graft Commission and expressed confidence that he would similarly be cleared of his pending graft case before the Ombudsman.

The PAGC had issued a resolution clearing Yap of graft charges filed by unnamed "disgruntled" NFA employees disgraced by administrative reforms he instituted.

"The PAGC clearance confirms the fact that the administrative reforms we have set in the NFA were well intended. The removes all doubts on the nationals and the manner by which the needed reforms were implemented," Yap said in a press statement.

He said the charges were filed by those who opposed the administrative reforms.

The PAGC directed Yap along with with Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, who was cleared of the charges that he violated anti-graft laws for allegedly conveying a message, Bunye said "Yap now resigned to the more complicated filed before the PAGC which investigated the cases without the officials' knowledge.

Yap expressed the hope the Ombudsman would similarly clear him of the graft charges filed by Martinez Espejo in connection with the alleged juggling and realignment of P922 million in NFA funds to procure fertilizer.

"The burdens and malicious nature of the case warrants its dismissal. The charges were part of the orchestrated disinformation job to destroy my reputation as a government official," Yap said.

Yap said the total amount was not even P922 million as claimed by Espejo, but P300 million transferred in NFA through a memorandum of agreement between the Department of Agriculture and NFA.

Of the P200-million procurement funds, only P93.8 million was used to buy fertilizer and the balance was duly returned to the DA. The awards were properly coordinated and the NFA worked hard to ensure that only the prior was most advantageous to the government, said Yap.

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Mefenamic Acid tab. 500 mg	✓	1.70	20.00	15.30/tab
Paracetamol susp. 120 mg/5 ml (60 ml)	✓	21.75	33.50	11.50/bot
Paracetamol tab 500 mg	✓	0.80	2.45	1.65/tab
Anti-biotic (Gamot sa Impeksyon)				
Amoxicillin cap. 500 mg	✓	2.80	9.00	6.20/cap
Amoxicillin cap. 250 mg	✓	1.75	7.00	5.25/cap
Amoxicillin susp. 125 mg/5 ml (60 ml)	✓	43.75	135.00	91.25/bot
Ampicillin cap. 500 mg	✓	3.50	13.75	10.25/cap
Cefalexin (Keflex) cap. 500 mg	✓	6.25	17.75	11.50/cap
Cefalexin (Keflex) susp. 125 mg/5 ml (60 ml)	✓	45.00	154.75	109.75/bot
Co-trimoxazole tab. (TMP 80mg/SMZ 400mg)	✓	2.50	39.50	37.00/tab
Co-trimoxazole susp. (TMP 40mg/SMZ 200mg)	✓	21.75	113.00	91.25/bot
Co-trimoxazole susp. (TMP 80mg/SMZ 400mg)	✓	35.40	174.75	139.35/bot
Anti-cough (Para sa Ubo)				
Bromhexine 4mg, ambroxol 15 mg/5 ml, 60 ml	✓	20.90	74.75	53.85/bot
Carbocisteine cap. 500 mg	✓	2.25	10.25	7.75/cap
Carbocisteine susp. 250 mg/5 ml, 60 ml	✓	43.00	87.95	44.95/bot
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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, August 4, 2004
18th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Jer 31:1-7
Gospel: Mt 15:21-28

Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. Now a Canaanite woman came from those borders and began to cry out, "Lord, Son of David, have pity on me! My daughter is tormented by a demon." But Jesus did not answer her; not even a word. So his disciples approached him and said, "Send her away; see how she is shouting after us."

Then Jesus said to her, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

But the woman was already kneeling before Jesus and said, "Sir, help me!" Jesus answered, "It is not right to take the bread from the children and throw it to the little dogs." The woman replied, "It is true, sir, but even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' tables." Then Jesus said, "Woman, you have great faith! Let it be as you wish." And her daughter was healed at that moment.

Commentary

There is a little of what Johann Tauler (1300-1361) said about this passage, "Our Lord behaved harshly and incompletely on this occasion. He not only denied her right to heal what ever needs, but He even said that she was not a child, not a human being, and He called her a dog. How could He temper and try her like this, denying her and humiliating her? But see what she did, and persisted in she was. She endured the shaming and pushed herself further and more than she could have hoped for. She dispelled and ingested them into the abyss... Oh, Lord, who said, 'but it can still happen that the little dogs are fed with the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table.'

Oh, children, if only we could all have this soul insight into the depths of truth, not through learned explanations, nor through words, nor through our senses at all, but in the very depths of our soul! We would know then that neither God nor all His creatures can or can ever and always as they we cannot and still more deeply into the truth... My children, if we could understand then everything depends on this, we should have grasped eternal truth.

This is the only way this book as an aspect to lead without any intermediary... We can only say: I can't explain it to her. Woman, your faith is great: let it be with you as you believe. Well, anyone who has their attitude and her approach to God will be given the same answer.

Publication Info: Fr. Jose Maria Ch., OP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, 1101 Philippines. Tel. 921-3990; fax 921-7430; e-mail: op@ssvp.org; Website: http://www.bible.ca/tl-song-Christian-Publications-Inc.htm

Supreme Court Doctrines

POLITICAL LAW (CONSTITUTIONAL LAW)—Authority of the Ombudsman—The Constitution, Section 15 of the Ombudsman Act of 1989 and Section 4 of the Implementing Law, as amended, do not give to the Ombudsman exclusive jurisdiction to investigate offenses committed by public officers or employees. The authority of the Ombudsman is co-extensive with that of prosecutors involving public officers or employees in connection with other government investigating agencies such as provincial, city and state prosecutors. However, the Ombudsman, in the exercise of its primary jurisdiction over cases cognizable by the Sandiganbayan, may take over, at any stage, from any investigatory agency, the investigation of such cases. Preparatory inquiries, in other words, respondent Ombudsman has not precluded from conducting any investigation of cases against public officers involving violations of penal laws but if the cases fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Sandiganbayan, the Office of the Ombudsman has, in the exercise of its primary jurisdiction, the power to take over at any stage. (Cabezas, petition) | Ibis Bass., Justice Jose Vitug Mendoza, Ombudsman Prosecutor Investigating Prosecutors of the Department of Justice, G.R. No. 120487)

By R. B. Vitto

Del Rosario staying as RP envoy to US

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has extended the term of duty of Philippine ambassador to Washington Albert del Rosario up to the end of the year, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

"He's still there, he's doing a good job," Bunye said of Del Rosario who was previously reported as having ended the country's most important diplomatic post.

The President last month extended Del Rosario the illustrious honor as recognition of his service.

But Bunye said Del Rosario has been "persuaded upon" to stay put up to December. He earlier said that the President has not decided on appointing a replacement.

He said Del Rosario only wants to return to Manila to visit his ailing mother Amparo.

Bunye said the President was not fencing the Philippine Embassy in Washington without an ambassador.

The government is seeking an expert diplomat for which the CV's that have been evaluated by Malacañang decision to withdraw the Philippine contingent in Iraq a month ahead of schedule.

The President gave in to the demands of Iraqi militants who threatened to behead Filipino truck driver Angelo de la Cruz if she did not pull out all Filipino troops in Iraq.

"We never doubted the resolution and firmness of the strategic partnership of the Philippines and the United States," Bunye said in a statement.

"The bridge of understanding and solidarity between America and Filipinos has been built through more than a century and has withstood the test of time," he said. "It will continue to stand as a platform of our common fight against terror and for the defense of democracy."

RP to hale Australia to WTO in banana row

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT of Foreign Affairs yesterday said the Philippines was ready to push before the World Trade Organization its complaint against Australia for allegedly restricting or block Philippine banana exports for the past 15 years.

In a press briefing, Undersecretary for International Economic Relations Edsel Custodio said Australia recently offered a new scheme to evaluate the quality of Philippine banana exports.

"We are hoping there would be things that are could also see that are available for consumption," he said, referring to talks between the two countries that have been going on for more than four years.

Officials claim that Australia was unfairly using its quarantine laws to keep out the fruit. It contends that the quarantine laws were, in fact, made "arbitrarily" in violation of WTO rules.

At 19, Fil-Am youngest Harvard law graduate

From page A1

In September, he will clerk for Court of Appeals Judge Timothy Hicks of the 10th Circuit, easing his transition from the academe to professional practice. The post-firm is one of prestige. Recent law graduates have driven six-figure annual salaries in private firms as well for government at $65,000.

'Reason moved by passion'

Hawa, a Harvard classmate from Mali, has jurisdiction over the southwestern states of Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Kansas, Eastern Oklahoma, Western Oklahoma, Northern Oklahoma, and New Mexico—where he hopes clerkships in Albuquerque.

Ebiel explained, "Most people would go into the greatest [straight from] school, but some take clerkships to immerse themselves in general practice and acquire experience in a variety of areas. Working for a federal judge is really a great way to get exposed to high-quality legal arguments."

He spends with as much finesse and composure as maturity, depth and outlook. He exudes the seriousness of purpose of a Jack McElroy but does not mind quoting the movie character Ellie Mendez in "Legally Blonde" to define love as "emotion inexplicably painful."

'Normal' family

Ebiel's childhood was as "normal" as possible under the circumstances, according to his parents who are both doctors. Bernie, a psychiatrist, and Theresa, a dermatologist, raised their only child in a nurturing environment with the proper blend of caring, attention and reasonable expectations.

"Intellectually, he has always been precocious," said the boy's uncle Jorge Cadiz, a prominent ophthalmologist in Manila. "His teachers noticed his remarkable maturity. His parents encouraged it. They didn't make him feel pressured."

Ebiel owes much of his success to the values instilled in him by his parents,

Anti-corruption roadmap drafted

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has drawn a "roadmap" for the fight against corruption and vowed to personally lead the campaign to eliminate the scourge.

Ms. Arroyo's stance to emulate Hong Kong, which she cited was considered one of Asia's most corrupt 20 years ago but has now emerged to be the second least corrupt.

Ms. Arroyo's anti-corruption roadmap includes imbuing anti-graft laws and lifestyle checks, dismantling the government bureaucracy and "inculcating" values in schools and in the government institutions through the Presidential Commission on Values Formation.

"I will chair it myself," Ms Arroyo said of the PCVF during yesterday's meeting of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council where she promised her anti-corruption program.

Englebert Bunyi said: "This is a very important agenda, the fact that the fight against corruption starts [at] personal anomies."

Ms Arroyo created the PCVF through Executive Order 314 issued on April 30, wherein she vowed to appoint a presidential adviser as chair of the commission. But she missed the assigned date by 210 days, as July 5, saying she would be the chair and would appoint 15 members whose terms would be co-terminus with her.

Moral governance

Ms Arroyo wants the commission to "institutionalize [our] moral governance" by designing and implementing programs to inculcate the values of honesty, modesty, integrity and good work ethics in the bureaucracy as well as file criminal complaints against "incorrigible and undesirable government personnel."

The Presidential told the Leduc, composed of congressional leaders and Cabinet officials, that she invited "high profile" religious leaders to join her in the PCVF, according to presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye.

Ms Arroyo mentioned Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, Philippine Council for Evangelical Churches Bishop Efraim Tendero, Aglipay Supreme Bishop Nicolas Pacis, Iglesia ni Cristo deputy executive minister Eduardo Manalo, El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde and Jesus Miracle Crusade's Pastor Apollo Quiboloy.

Bunye could not say if the religious leaders accepted the invitation but said they are "prepared to be very offensive as far as pushing this agenda is concerned."

The Inquirer reported over the weekend that the bishops accepted the President's invitation when they talked last Wednesday. But Velarde appears cold to the idea, as far as his spokesperson Ideal Ibrahim learned.

Integrated approach

"The President feels that we have to come up with an integrated approach," Bunye said. "If you separate the problem of corruption which has been with us for a long time and you cannot solve it by just enforcement of laws, suppose the system. You really have to improve the orientation of people who would be running the system."

Bunye said the President presented her anti-corruption program in her second Leduc meeting since delivering her State of the Nation Address last July 26. It was the second in Ms Arroyo's five-point reform package she wants Congress to support.

Bunye said Presidential Chief of Staff Rigoberto Tiglao, head of the Transparency Group which conducts lifestyle checks, presented the "Roadmap for the campaign against corruption" while Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin discussed the planned government re-engineering.

In the roadmap, corruption was identified as "one of the biggest obstacles to economic development and poverty reduction," a major concern of the people and one of the oft-repeated arguments against new taxes. The Philippines is perceived to be the fourth most corrupt country in Asia.

The Arroyo administration wants to transform, through legislation, the Office of the Ombudsman into the model of Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption.

Lawyer nabbed for bribery try

By Tina Santos

FOR ALLEGEDLY trying to bribe a public official, lawyer Oliver Lozano was arrested by members of the Central Police District inside a Quezon City hotel yesterday morning.

Armed with a warrant of arrest issued by Metropolitan Trial Court Judge Angeline Sheila Quinayo Lozano, a known Marcos loyalist, was nabbed around 1:30 p.m. inside Subi Hotel.

The issuance of a warrant against Lozano was in connection with the charges of attempted corruption of a public official recently filed by Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) operative PO1 Anjo Villanueva, prosecutors said.

Lozano was arrested by the members of CPD Warrant Section led by SPO4 Hermelo Roque while he was having a meeting with his clients.

Lozano immediately posted bail worth P10,000 for his provisional liberty, police said.

However, in a phone interview with the Inquirer, Lozano denied that such incident occurred saying those were just "rumors."

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Editor Lorenzo B. Bolivar

Documents from Pakistani trigger alert

WASHINGTON—The detailed surveillance photos and documents that prompted higher terror warnings came largely from a Pakistani computer engineer whose capture set Pakistani and US officials searching for those planning to harm America, and what they intended to do.

In the 72 hours leading up to Sunday's warning about new risks of terror attacks, senior officials poured over a wealth of detailed new information indicating al-Qaida operatives were scrutinizing strikingly precise information about five financial services buildings in the United States.

The mere of hundreds of photos, sketches and written documents came to light as a result of Pakistani intelligence leads, as they try to learn more about possible plots against the operator targets: The Citigroup Center building and the New York Stock Exchange in New York, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank buildings in Washington and Prudential Financial Inc. headquarters in Newark, New Jersey.

The information amassed by the planners "was gathered in 2000 and 2001," and "it appears that some of it may have been updated as recently as January of this year," Frances Townsend, the White House homeland security adviser, said on PBS' "NewsHour With Jim Lehrer."

But, she added, "you can't tell from the intelligence itself whether or not those individuals [who amassed it] are still here."

At a news conference earlier Monday, Townsend denied that political considerations affected the timing of the intelligence disclosures, which came the week after Democrats nominated Sen. John Kerry as their presidential candidate. "It had nothing to do with the Democratic National Convention," she said.

On Monday, a Pakistani intelligence official said Ehtsham, a computer and communications expert, had sent messages to suspected al-Qaida members using code words—a practice typical also to terrorist-related organizations—but intercepted US efforts to unravel the Sept. 11, 2001, plot. But the Pakistan official refused to say if Ehtsham was part of al-Qaida.

Khan's information has been merged with other pieces of intelligence, including information gleaned after Pakistan's arrest last month of number-3 al-Qaida operative Ahmed Khadir Ghailani.

Emails that included plans for new attacks in Great Britain and the United States were found on the computer of the captured Ghailani, Pakistan's information ministry, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, said Monday.

But it was Khan and the information found after his arrest that was mostly behind Cheney's decision to raise the government's terror alert for the financial services buildings in New York, Washington and northern New Jersey—to orange, or high alert. AP

Security tightened at US financial centers

NEW YORK—Black—bad police turned out in assault rifles moved in to protect America's financial heart on Monday after warnings that al-Qaida bombers might strike, and New Yorkers vowed not to be intimidated by terrorists.

As the other El Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge put New York, Washington and other security centers on code-orange, or "high" alert for attacks—the nation's second highest level of readiness—security was visibly stepped up.

Unlike previous alerts, this one specifically mentioned buildings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in Washington, Citigroup and the New York Stock Exchange in New York and Prudential Financial in New Jersey's Newark.

The latest threat a armed squarely at the heart of the corporate system—Citigroup is the world's largest financial services firm, the NYSE the world's biggest stock exchange, Prudential is a major insurance firm and the IMF and World Bank are used to head off global economic crises.

Cited as lovely scenes and worldclass cities, prime guarded sites in New York, where almost 2,800 people were killed in the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks that brought down the World Trade Center. The case officers were on alert for possible truck bombs, suicide bombers and chemical and biological attacks through heating and air conditioning systems.

In Washington, some streets were shut to traffic and police set up a temporary security perimeter around the 20-Capitol to extend congestion east and south.

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg rang the opening bell at the New's Exchange, just blocks from where the Trade Center's Twin Towers once stood, to signal business as usual.

"New York City is not going to be cowed by terrorists, make no mistake about it," he said after breaking ground on a new Bank of America building in midtown.

Republican Gov. George Pataki and the Manhattan skyscraper groundbreaking was "a symbol of defiance to those who would have us live in terror or live in fear."

"It's greater specificity beyond what we've seen before," one US official said. "And they're playing something more."

The country was ramped up at bridges and tunnels in and out of the city and at buildings named in the latest alert, such as Citigroup headquarters in midtown Manhattan where employees had their identification checked and bags searched. Fred Info Liaise Bank sent employees down.

At the IMF and World Bank, where security was already high, more police guarded entrances and about 1,000 World Bank employees and to devote upgrades to security.

Reminders were entered at Prudential in Newark, New Jersey, to guard from truck bombs. Security firms said they were flooded with requests for advice and more armed guards.

The US Border Patrol was beefing up security along the Texas-Mexico border, deploying more agents as well as cameras, sensors to remote and little-used areas.

NEW York City Police and a bomb-sniffing dog search a CRX truck on Broadway near Wall Street in New York City. Security near the New York Stock Exchange was tightened after a terror warning was issued for financial institutions in New York, New Jersey and Washington, DC on Aug. 1 by the US Department of Homeland Security. AP

Canberra to host regional meet on counterterrorism

CANBERRA—International legal experts will gather in Australia this week to discuss how they can step up the fight against international terrorism, it was learned here.

The two-day meeting starting Wednesday in Canberra will bring together legal experts from across the region to discuss how countries can adopt similar counterterror legislation.

"Strong and sensitive legal frameworks to counter terrorism are just as important as an effective [law enforcement] network," Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and Attorney General Philip Ruddock said Tuesday in a joint statement.

"We will be working with regional countries to build legal regimes that make it harder for terrorists," it added.

The experts will consider what more can be done in the Asia-Pacific region to strengthen antiterrorism laws and cooperation arrangements for the gathering evidence and extraditing terrorist suspects.

"There have been some terrible successes against terrorism in our region but we must keep striving to ensure there are no legal loopholes available to the terrorists," the ministers said.

Indonesia is scheduled to host a similar working group meeting on law enforcement issues in mid-August.

"These meetings again highlight Australia's ongoing commitment to fight the scourge of terrorism in cooperation not only with neighbors and friends and to bring to account to justice whoever they are found, "the ministers said. AP

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SCHEDULE OF SPECIAL EVENTS

FUNCTION ROOM A

Wednesday, August 11, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 11:00AM
Forum on Philippine Literature and Change
(Lecture Development Association of the Philippines)

1:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Pre-MBF Writers (Re-Make Projects) (2004 Environment a. Levels 1 & 2)

Thursday, August 12, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12 NOON
Public Forum on "Networking for Survival: Efficiency of Consortia/Cooperatives" by Prof. Assoc. of Academic & Research Libraries

1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Poems by LIFLIMA

2:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Forum on "Visual and Speech Marketing"
by Book Development Association of the Philippines

Friday, August 13, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 11:00 AM
Pre-Big Leap "Challenge of Publishing Quality Textbooks for Pre-school, Elementary, High School & College" by C & E Pub., Inc.

3:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Book Launching by Al Peale

Saturday, August 14, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Pre-MBF Parental Involvement in Early Literacy/Family Literacy by Philippine Normal University in cooperation with the Reading Association of the Philippines

1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Publication Seminar by Philippine Bible Society

2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
National Book Awards by Manila Critics Circle

Sunday, August 15, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Art Workshop by Art is Fun

1:30 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.
The Joys of Reading/Essay Writing Contest Awarding Ceremonies

FUNCTION ROOM B

Wednesday, August 11, 2004
1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Film Showing "Bayani" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

3:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Film Showing "Bayani" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

Thursday, August 12, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Forum on "Philippine Literature and Change"
(Lecture Development Association of the Philippines)

1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Film Showing "Pahiram" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

2:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Film Showing "Pahiram" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

4:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.
Forum on "Printing Books on Demand" by Fuji Xerox

6:30 P.M. - 7:30 P.M.
Golden Dragon Awards by Philippine Educational Systems, Inc.

Friday, August 13, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 11:00 AM
Film Showing "Ang Pamilya Ni Mariposa" and "Sulat Kita" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

3:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Forum on "Creating a Print-Class Environment in the Library" by Association of Special Libraries of the Philippines

3:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Forum on "Authorship and Editorial Management" by Book Development Association of the Philippines

Saturday, August 14, 2004
1:00 P.M. - 7:30 P.M.
National Quiz Bee sponsored by Philippine Booksellers Association, Inc.

Sunday, August 15, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Women, Religion and Spirituality in Asia Book Launching and Publishing, Inc.

1:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Pre-MBF - DepEd Lakas Math Olympiad 2004 Championship Round (Levels 1 & 2)

6:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.
Book Presentation "In the Light of Truth" by Ma. Elfrieda Guanzon Abad

ACTIVITY AREA 1

Aug 11 @ 10, 1:30 P.M. - 2:30 P.M. - Storytelling by Bunny Paredes
2:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. - Storytelling by Bunny Paredes
Aug 12 - 1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. - Storytelling by Bunny Paredes
3:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. - Artistic and Crafts by Bunny Paredes
Aug 13 - 1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. - Storytelling by Bunny Paredes
2:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M. - Face Painting, Storytelling, Kite Making by Liberal Publishing
Aug 14 - 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN - Storytelling by Bunny Paredes
2:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. - Artistic and Crafts by Bunny Paredes

ACTIVITY AREA 2

Aug 11 - 11:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M. - Flower Arrangement by Bagong Himamaylan Foundation
2:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. - Candle Making by Bagong Himamaylan Foundation
Aug 12 - 1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M. - Basic Art and Animation Workshop by Animation Fun Inc.
Aug 14 - 10:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. - Landscaping Workshop by Cornerstone Garden
3:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M. - Logo Reading by Filipino Mark Media
Aug 15 - 11:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. - Flower Arrangement by Bagong Himamaylan Foundation

ACTIVITY AREA 3

Aug 12 - 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. - Dangerous and Terrorism Watching by Commerce Center
4:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M. - Basic Hair Cutting by Bagong Himamaylan Foundation
Aug 13 - 3:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M. - Storytelling by Malaya Revolution / Chat

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Bombings blamed on Zarqawi

Frightened Christians try to leave Iraq

MOURNERS grieve during a funeral service at an Iraqi Christian nun, Wasmi Georgis, and his 10-year-old son Rahid, who were killed in Sunday's car bomb attacks on churches in the capital Baghdad. AFP

Militants kill Turkish hostage; truckers opt to stop operations

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Marriott blast survivor recounts confrontation with Islamic bombers

Kerry offers deal to reduce US troops in Iraq

WASHINGTON—John Kerry says he can "put a deal together" as president to reduce security support US troops overnight in Iraq, a pledge reminiscent of Richard Nixon's secret plan to end the Vietnam War and Dwight D. Eisenhower's promise to stop fighting in Korea.

Like those Republican presidential candidates, the Democrat's blueprint for peace lacks detail and fans critics copycatting.

Still, weary skittish about the death toll in Iraq, Kerry is pleading blame on President George W. Bush and his shaky relationship with allies who have refused to support US troops with soldiers of their own. The line seems Massachusetts arrogance to suggest he has back channel assurances that foreign leaders would dismiss if he were president.

"There is a potential to be able to get added together new like-minded nations," Kerry said in his first interview as the Democratic nominee. "At least, that is the perception that smart people like Joe Biden and, yes, Senator Carl Levin and other leaders who've been there for a long time."

He said his fellow Democratic senators, reporting on their foreign travels, have told him, "It changes in the presidency is necessary to see ability to secure our interests and enlist allies."

But when asked for hard evidence than his victory would produce a troops-reducing deal for America, neither Kerry nor his fellow senators cite anything other than their vague perceptions and common hopes.

"I can't give you the details of any detail, obviously," Sen. Carl Levin, a Michigan Democrat, said Monday. "You don't negotiate a deal until you have a leader who has been in negotiations solved."

Levin said he has talked to foreign leaders about potential changes in their Iraq policies after the US election. "Nobody is going to say what the details of the deal are. They simply report to us that [some of the administration's] in response that you can't take a risk" and deploy troops to Iraq, he said.

"I'm not going to tell you which foreign leaders, because it'd be breaking the confidences of foreign leaders that they met," said Levin, the top Democrat on the Senate armed services committee. Last spring, Kerry said foreign leaders portrayed him to Bush, though he also refused to identify any.

Levin reasoned on the question of whether any foreign leader promised to get more involved in Iraq if Kerry wins. "It seems to be that's the basic implication," he said at first.

But has any leader made a commitment?

No, he replied.

"I'm not in position nor should I attempt to negotiate with a foreign government," Levin said.

Sen. Joseph Biden, a Delaware Democrat and a top Kerry adviser, thinks Kerry could worry more about than the president, said spokesperson Norm Kurz. But that's only hypothetical—"I don't think there's a guarantee," he said.

Kerry is only the latest presidential candidate to offer unspecified plans for peace.

In 1952, Eisenhower was running against Democrat Adlai Stevenson to replace unpopular incumbent Harry Truman when he promised to "concentrate on the job of ending the Korea war. That job requires a personal trip to Korea," he said. "I shall go to Korea."

Truman called the pledge a "desperate attempt to get votes." When Eisenhower went to Korea however, his Election Day victory margin in the inauguration Truman called it "a power-of-disappointment."

Republicans are just as tough on Kerry.

Sen. Kerry has an enormous lack of credibility on that issue," said Bush spokesperson Anne Schlaf.

Kerry voted against the first Persian Gulf War, which threw Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait in 1991. Eleven years later, he voted to give Bush authority to use force against Saddam, then voted against the bill to help pay for the conflict in anti-war sentiment threatened to undermine his bid for the Democratic nomination. AP

PASALAN (top-left) and Fricke (top-right) install equipment necessary for the new European Automated Transfer Vehicle to dock. The two astronauts began a spacewalk on Tuesday that aims to pave the way for the European Space Agency to send its first cargo craft to the International Space Station. REUTERS

'Messenger' starts Mercury probe

WASHINGTON—US spacecraft Messenger lifted off from Cape Canaveral in Florida, early Tuesday on a six-year explorer journey toward Mercury, the closest planet to the Sun.

With Messenger safely nestled in its payload bay, a massive Delta II rocket roared off from the launching pad at about 2:16 a.m., carrying its number of seconds from a fire-breathing giant into a tiny speck of light in the sky.

The launch was delayed by one day due to strong winds around by a tropical storm churning in the Atlantic Ocean.

But "Tropical Storm Alex is no longer an influence on weather in the Cape Canaveral vicinity," George Diller, spokesperson for the Kennedy Space Center, told reporters shortly before launch.

Minutes after launch, the Delta rocket released the refrigerator-sized probe on the first leg of its 7.9 billion-km odyssey through the solar system.

One of the most enigmatic planets of the solar system, Mercury endures more solar radiation than any other planet and has one of the densest crusts of all, scientists say.

Its daytime temperatures could reach 450 degrees Celsius, or 840 degrees Fahrenheit, which is enough to melt lead.

However, at night, Mercury plunges into a deep freeze that could be enough to liquefy oxygen; the temperature plummets to minus 22.2 Celsius, or minus 368 Fahrenheit.

Despite these dramatic quirks, researchers, using radar, discovered in the early 1990s what appeared to be a glint of ice under the planet's massive polar craters.

Scientists at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration are also puzzled why Mercury has a disproportionately large iron core, which takes up more than 60 percent of its total mass.

"This spacecraft is there questions will not only tell us about about Mercury, but illuminate processes that affect all the terrestrial planets," said Sean Solomon, a lead scientist on the Messenger project.

The probe will try to tackle questions left unanswered by a similar mission undertaken by Nasa three decades ago. Probe Mariner 10 sailed past Mercury three times in 1974 and 1975 but, given the level of that era's equipment, was able to gather data on less than half of the planet's surface.

In contrast, Messenger is packed with state-of-the-art scientific instruments, including a color imager and a neutron spectrometer capable of bombarding the Mercury surface with gamma- and X-rays, neutrons and laser beams, and measure its magnetic fields.

The spectrometers could help determine with more certainty if ice-filled there is ice on Mercury, measure the chemistry of surface rocks and its thin atmosphere, Nasa officials said.

The plan calls for three flybys of Mercury in 2008 and 2009 and a yearlong orbit of the planet starting in March 2011.

Messenger project manager David Grant called the $427-million mission that will include 15 loops around the Sun "risky and difficult," but said there was every reason to believe in its successful outcome.

"The team is confident that the spacecraft they designed, built and tested is ready for the journey and its mission to Mercury," he said.

The successful launch is also seen as a political boost for Nasa, which has been targeted for severe budget cuts by congressional appropriators eager to reduce the skyrocketing budget deficit fueled by massive spending on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Last month, a House subcommittee cut President George W. Bush's 2005 request for the space agency by $1.1 billion to a total $15.1 billion, which is more than a quarter billion less than Nasa's budget for the current fiscal year.

The White House has threatened to veto the bill if the funds are not restored. AFP

Russian, US astronauts begin spacewalk

MOSCOW—Two astronauts began a spacewalk on Tuesday that aims to pave the way for the European Space Agency to send its first cargo craft to the International Space Station (ISS), Russian mission control said.

Russian cosmonaut Gennady Padalka and US astronaut Michael Fincke, both stationed on the station since April, said its mid equipment necessary for the new European Automated Transfer Vehicle (ATV) to dock.

The spacewalk will leave the station announced for six hours.

"The launch was opened at 1:05[0] and the cosmonauts are in the process of going out," a mission control spokesperson said.

"They have two main tasks... one is to work on scientific apparatus installed on the outside of the module and the second is to prepare it for the upcoming docking of the European cargo ship."

The first ATV named the Jules Verne, it due to be launched next year and will provide a welcome lodging board as Russia struggles with the funding of being the sole lifeliner to the station while US space shuttles remain grounded.

Russia has launched all manned and cargo ships to the orbital platform since February 2000, when the Colombia shuttle disintegrated on re-entry, killing the crew, now aboard and prompting Nasa to withdraw the remaining fleet from service. Reuters

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2. Kids are tasked to correctly answer all questions and e-mail the answer to kidquiz@inquirer.com.ph with name, address, telephone number and date of birth.
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4. Entries must be received by 2:00 pm of Thursday to qualify for the electronic raffle draw.
5. An individual may only send one entry.
6. The raffle draw will be held every Thursday at 3:00 pm at the Inquirer office.
7. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
8. Winners will be notified by phone and registered mail. Their names will be announced via print ads.
9. Winners can claim their prizes at the ITD office upon presentation of a valid ID (school ID).
10. Raffle prizes not claimed within 60 days from end of promotion will be forfeited.
11. Employees and staff of ITD and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity and affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.
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SACRED MOUNTAIN
A man places a fork among hundreds left by visitors in a traditional rite to bring relationships or offer blessings for family at a temple atop Tai Shan, the most revered of China's five sacred "fasten mountains, south of Jinan in eastern China's Shandong province. Only five of China's emperors ever made it to the summit of the mountain, dating 1545 m above sea level, but today a short cable-car ride or a climb up the 6,660 step stairway can take one to the heights where Confucius said, "The world is small," and Mao added, "The East is Red." AFP

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Dapat bang limitahan ang dami ng anak?

Fischer seeks refugee status

TOKYO—Former world chess champion Bobby Fischer, wanted by Washington for defying sanctions on Yugoslavia, is looking for countries willing to give him a home—including perhaps Serbia and Montenegro—if Japan goes ahead with a decision to deport him, an adviser said on Tuesday.

Fischer, 61, arrested in Japan in April and was detained at Narita airport near Tokyo last month when he tried to leave for the Philippines on a passport with his name misspelled.

Fischer has been wanted in the United States since 1992 when he violated US economic sanctions by winning $3 million for beating old rival Boris Spassky in a match in Yugoslavia.

The chess and economic chessmaster also vanished only months after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in the United States to give an interview to Philippine radio in which he praised the strikes and said he wanted to see America "wiped out."

Japanese immigration officials rejected Fischer's initial appeal last week and his lawyer handed final documents for a second plea to Justice Minister Chieko Tonomura Monday. Reuters

JUAN Pio Pulos (right), co-owner of the Yiss Bikini supermarket, stands with his son Victor Daniel Pulos (left), in the entrance to the district attorney's office in Asuncion. The Pulos's is being investigated by police. AP PHOTO

Paraguay fire survivors blame locked doors for high death toll

ASUNCION—Locked doors prevented or slowed the escape of supermarket shoppers from a blaze spreading fire that killed at least 396 people and injured hundreds more, survivors said. The incident's two owners, a married pair and a security official were detained for questioning.

The confirmed death toll soared at 3:30 Monday but Independent Channel 4 television said 564 were killed, citing unidentified interior ministry officials.

The cause of Paraguay's worst disaster in decades was not known, but police said they were investigating whether an exploding gas canister in the food court may have started the blaze.

The owners, a father and son, denied the doors were locked.

The fire tore through the bustling, three-story supermarket in a suburb of Asuncion, the capital, during lunch hour. The blaze collapsed one floor and engulfed the food court and parking garage.

Officials also said at least 276 people were injured, but Channel 4 put its figure at 324. Government officials had no comments on the country's higher casualty totals. Also, investigators were trying to determine how many more were inside the building but escaped unharmed.

Isabel Bordon, a 20-year-old cashier who survived Sunday, said she at first found her way blocked as the mob to escape. "I was coaxed the main door but it was locked," she said from her hospital bed Monday.

Some neighbors said they were forced to break windows to enter the supermarket because the doors remained open.

"There were people crowded outside the main entrance using sticks and poles trying to open the door," said Raul Ferrara, who rushed to the supermarket and found his brother, Hernan, who had been shopping inside.

"We couldn't get inside and the people couldn't get out," said Liliana Hernandez, 36, who also went looking for her Relatives supermarket.

She said even firefighters, frustrated in their efforts to get inside, resorted to hammering holes through a wall of her house to reach the supermarket. "They broke two giant holes in the wall to carry bodies out," she said.

Juan Pio Pulos, who owns the market with his son, dismissed speculation that the doors had been deliberately locked to prevent looting.

"The security guards confirmed that the doors weren't closed by them," he said, angrily. He said he "presumed" the disaster and criticized the building inst safety standards. Both men were being held on suspicion of failing to prevent the tragedy. AP

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VOL. XXIV NO. 238 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

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Waltzing Manila

EDITORIAL

THE PERENNIAL problem of Philippine diplomacy has been the way we let hygiene be bygones. Philippine administrations tend to be easygoing and all too willing to oblige other countries, when arguments between states shouldn't be that easy to patch up.

Take the rift between the Philippines and Australia. In recent days, soothing words have been coming from the Philippines, in response to a toning down of the rhetoric emanating from official Australian circles. The question that must be asked is, is the Philippine all too willing to dance to Australia's tune?

Our diplomats and our government must realize that the strong, coarse, and even vulgar, words that have been uttered by the Australian leaders are a reflection not only of a difference in policies, but of a deeply disturbing contemptuous attitude on their part toward us. The present Australian government has a low opinion of us, and too high an opinion of itself.

It would be wrong, and unfair, not only to us but to Australia, for the Philippines to merely shrug off what has happened. Shrugging off overtures and hurtful behavior may be easy to do when it comes to personal friends, but it shouldn't be so easy to shrug off official pronouncements between states.

The Philippines has held fast to its emerging, more independent policies, and retained the moral advantage in its relations with Australia. For our officials to back down now would only send a message that our reaction to Australian rhetoric was merely emotional pique, and not a substantive difference. Most of all, it would send the message to the Australian government that we are easily bamboozled. Only say a nice word, and Manila is all but ready to dance to Canberra's tune.

This cannot be. The Philippines should only be interested in dealing with nations that can exercise enough self-control, and master enough rotundity, decency and respect, to restrict policy differences to the level of policy debate, and not indulge in careless gutter language. We cannot be moving forward and backward merely on the say-so of Australian officials who cannot be counted on to even act in a civilized manner.

Only by standing firm, by not being easily swayed by honeyed words that we cannot even be sure to be sincere, can the Philippines build a truly equitable relationship with Australia.

Australia has outraged our country, and such wrongs shouldn't be easily undone. By all means, we should give Australia a chance to prove itself repentant. But until its actions and unreformed modernism are reflected in official actions, programs and statements over a sustained period of time, we must be skeptical.

It is reasonable to ask whether Australia's government is really feeling regret over its statements, or whether it's simply surprised the Philippines and Filipinos aren't the pushovers they assumed us to be. It is equally reasonable to demand of our government that it not prove the racial official Australian attitudes toward our country by acting like a pushover now.

Any behavior that is not polite yet skeptical, cautious yet reasonable, will serve to convince foreign countries that we aren't a people to be taken seriously. If Australia wants friendship with us, it must act as any friend must act, when it has wronged another. It must eschew a period of probation. It must live with its actions and sentiments being viewed with a skeptical eye. It must be patient just as our country has been tolerant and unwilling to stoop down to Australia's level.

For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. This is one of Newton's laws. It applies to human and international relations as it does to science. The Philippines has far more to gain by being cautious and initially cool, to Australia, than it does by reverting to the old Philippine stereotype of being messenger to please the white men.

It is quite disappointing that after having been independent for 58 years, our country still has to be reminded of some of the basic lessons of sovereignty.

Burnham didn't clear the military; DOJ did

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE CURRENT controversy over whether or not former hostage Gracia Burnham cleared the military of collusion with the Abu Sayyaf would not have happened had the media not been fanned from the wind. In the first place, she has not unconditionally. The wind is a natural force, and the Commission on Elections has also accused it criminal cases are to be tried in public. Trials of criminal cases should therefore be open to the public. The only time a trial can on a domestic dispute where the law, it is confined to privacy. The government had no right to bar media from the trial.

If the purpose was to protect Burnham or avoid having an overcrowded courtroom, the media could have been kept out but the proceedings could have been made available by relaying it closed-circuit television to members of the public outside, as the Supreme Court sometimes does during its oral hearings. Or at least a loudspeaker could have been installed so that the public could hear what is the testimony of the lawyer and the answers of the witness.

The media is why we needed separation of executive, legislative and the judiciary, although it was made known early on by advocates of the media that they would not support any measure that would restrict the media's freedom to report. Besides, the National Press Club, the Philippine Press Institute and the Publishers Organization of the Philippines protested until now. Only Sandiganbayan, the anti-graft court instead of the regular courts, has been made to permit media coverage.

Why the ban completely done to protect Burnham since reporting that the military had been cleared by the senate? I hope not, because Department of Justice officials, of all people, would then be liable for obstruction of justice in giving the erroneous briefing to the press. I hope it was, as claimed, "an honest mistake," not only by the prosecutors who gave the briefing but, ironically, also by the acting justice secretary.

State prosecutor Senior Assistant Agnes Burnham inconsistently, a memorandum saying "There is no collusion between the ASG and the military." Senior state prosecutor Leo Dacanay followed it up with "Our statement is that the military did not collude with the ASG." And Assistant Secretary Alexander Gustavo Ilarde declared that Burnham's statement, "given under oath and in open court, should clearly put misunderstanding that her book might have created."

Ilarde has overstated the matter by trying to cite and misread Burnham's statement. She did not say that the military did not collude with the ASG. She said only that the military was cleared, not by Burnham, but by the DOJ.

"What is this with our vast lawyers think, that justice is the Alcoholics Anonymous and never to be arrested," said the hapless editorial has Member Ilarde the editorial in full for more telling questions.)

Is the DOJ competent? and the DOJ's duty is to prosecute all the accused, including, possibly, members of the military, not to act as their defense lawyers. Isn't there a rule in judgment here, a rule to acquit the military? If so, how to sig the bubble does it burst.

Could it be also contributed to the civilian government is afraid of the military? But now that not the whole military establishment is under suspicion here but only certain members. Dismissing up the whole military is unfair to responsible ones.

Another mystery is why President Macapagal-Arroyo is transferring the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) to the Department of Finance (DOF). The two institutions operate are doing very well under the Office of the President, so why monkey them? As the saying goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix."

Two other money-earning agencies, the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and the Bureau of Customs (BOC), are already under the DOF. And they are rumored to be the two most corrupt agencies in the government. Does the President want Pagcor to be as corrupt as these agencies?

But there is talk that the transfers are not so simple as they first look. When, it is said that the move is intended to dismiss the supporters of militants who want to replace PCSO Chair Rosarypalit Singson the Lotto who is still recovering from a stroke. Second, it is said that a gambling lobby in the region wants to take over Pagcor because of its forbidding huge gambling and entertainment park at the reclamation site on Roxas Boulevard, south of Luz Vegas of the Orient.

Third, it is said that Mrs. Arroyo is bad by a Chinese gambling lord who already tried to enter the Philippines but failed. Now he is trying to come in through the backdoor, entering his partners any some Filipino and Chinese-Filipino businessmen who have already been caught red-handed in an earlier scam. One of them is in Subic abroad. This Wallis, or so the story goes, wants to have a monopoly of all the gambling casinos in the region. An investigation of Pagcor and its duties [illegible] be extremely complicated.

To top it all, the new finance secretary may be a member of this Wallis, or they say. The persons who will recommend her to GMA is her husband Cielito Habito, former secretary of Trade and Industry (DTI), the spokesman continues. As you see here all the pieces fall together.

* * *

Isaneberg Pimlol has its dubbings on TIS Sales Store, Rainel, Manila. It will have a piano bar, a library, a lounge, a billiards and game room, a private office and conference room, and a bar here. The formal inauguration will be in remember two.

* * *

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Burning point

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

NAIROBI/BEIRUT 9/11" is a takeoff from "Hiroshima 4/11," but Hiroshima's more eloquent a reason where firefighters do not put out fires but make them—as hate books. It is not required but moving. "Hiroshima 9/11" is as much about all 9/11-like explosions in Palestine 4/11," and it is just as brilliant.

Michael Moore is the fellow most Filipinos who watch the Oscars Awards with the same passion they watch the NBA finals, self-appointed spokesman for the world's masses. Mr. Bush "Shoot-'Em" was the trophy for best documentary for "Bowling for Columbine," a witty insightful look at the culture of violence that pervades America. His "Fahrenheit 9/11, Bush" was for Bush's splendid little war in Iraq.

"Fahrenheit 9/11" is that phrase amplified in more than hour of biting criticism, satire, humor, and crushing accurate and comparisons for why we have Bush's economic mess and why the American people, if not, are quite understandably, should vote the Palme d'Or to the man's Cannes Film Festival.

It begins with Bush becoming president four years ago, in circumstances that completely undermine our own basic democratic values. Gore's real night want to take notice. Al Gore was predicted to win Florida, the swing of states, Bush did. Three things made it possible. Bush's campaign chair was the state governor's cousin, whose name listed a company to launch off "inaccuracy" votes from the list, his brother was the governor of Florida who manipulated the people, and his cousin was the prime time in Fox News—who, incidentally, is owned by Rupert Murdoch, Australian media mogul and friend of Australian Prime Minister Benjamin Mahler, Texas Democrat, MEL CRENshaw, and you know a number of times.

There is one difference. Then called Bush's car with eggs on his way to his inauguration, she has since *a happened in a 20 president*. Hell, it was the first time they had duplicated Nixon. He should've had Watergate, too. For the next months up till 9/11, and indeed well into 9/11, Bush spent his days golfing and fishing—he was on holiday 40 percent of the time. When news of 9/11 got to him, he was on vacation in Florida, and did nothing for seven minutes. Why was he so stunned? Well, an official is used to being fed. A press desk'd read to stand by having the solutions to his closet writing homework.

How did George W Bush like Iraqua? He did so by coming up with nonsense, like his dad, using Saudi money. Indeed, see how ordinary Saudi money has money from a family called Bin Laden. Yes, that's Bin Laden, the family that counts Osama as member. Unlike his dad, George W has his businesses in the ground, but unlike the Bin Ladens invested in him. He was, after all, the son of the head of the CIA and knew the president of the United States. Bush Senior, who's he himself became president, he and his father were already members of the Carlyle Group, which was into weapons-making and in which the Bin Ladens were also investors.

When 9/11 struck, the Bin Laden citizens promptly cancelled all flights to and from the United States, for the White House allowed more than a hundred Saudi nationals, including the 20 Bin Ladens family members, to fly out of the United States. Also a many has happened either to capture Osama. Bush preoccupy forgot about him. Worse yet, it the very "Suppose one group of people, say the American people, plan [on] $400,000 to be president of the US. Then another group of people invests in you, your friends, and close cohorts $1.4 billion even a number of times, whom are you gonna like?"

All else, Bush's father was a financier of what to expect from Moore's latest opus. I will not spoil your enthusiasm for propaganda to detail. Suffice it to say that the rest of it deals with Bush subsequent's dubious intentions—in striking the American public's attention, since he himself had been fawned on a well before 9/11—on to Iraq. The criminal negligence with which he handled the intelligence about a possible strike by Osama Bin Laden on America, while it has been revealed by subsequent investigations, is matched only by his dogged determination to connect Saddam Hussein to al-Qaeda and weapons of mass destruction, connections that were not just incorrect but nonexistent.

But what makes "Fahrenheit 9/11" outstanding from where I stand is not just the depth of its research and honesty but of its artistry. Moore is a master at the use of irony and images a point I and many others have been trying to convey in vain. Which is that if the world can perceive such of those who perished in 9/11, notwithstanding them in all the accomplishments of their lives, the same world can grieve for each man, woman and child who perished in Iraq, remembering how they once lifted for hearts of their lovers once with the hopes of laughter. Bush 9/11 and the Iraq invasion are connected by the thread of the same depraved work of madness. The dead in both cases are sacrificed in the altar of madness when.

I read recently that "Fahrenheit 9/11" is not just playing to good audiences in downtown theaters in the United States because they are of the top. If greaters were the gun nuts? I couldn't be happier for Moore, or for the American people who have been hapless victims of a very real nutcase that pointed their guns at the world and pulled the trigger. Especially such nutcases were dredged up for months to justify going into Iraq. I myself would suggest the documentary be made required viewing for the Senate and Congress (I've given up on Malacañang—nine minds were too far gone)—it is instructional and of inspiration. Few things can better help to make sense here. I would suggest further it be made required viewing for the rest of the world, for a more or equally monumental act of vigilance, the kind that keeps nuts in jails for.

Excuses were, the fool might was agree.

Philippine press under fire

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

THE 1951 MILLIOS criminal libel case lodged by former Foreign Secretary Roberto R. Romulo against the Philippine Free, its publisher and columnist Marcelo Soriano and its editor has put the entire Philippine press on the spot.

Romulo's case is not a run-of-the-mill complaint against abuse of press freedom. Its broader significance lies in the fact that the Philippine press has an interest to protect the public from its abuses. The complaint raises issues on the capacity of these institutions—the Philippine Press Institute, the Philippine Press Council—to discipline errant members who have transgressed the fundamental standards of ethical conduct and practice. The issues are (1) to give the targets of attacks the right to reply. The issue of fairness, a fundamental principle in press freedom, is at stake.

(2) Is not the criminal aspect of the libel case that made it a landmark action. Romulo's motive goes to the test the notion that the press, though its self-regulatory bodies, is an institutional fixture, only clear to its verbal claim to press freedom and the public, incapable of making its members see the line to control its own excesses.

Although Soriano, a liberal editorial writer, is the principal focus of the complaint, he is only one in a number of columnists who write for the Philippine Free. Romulo's action is the first time that the press, through

Shifting blame away from globalization

THE ARROYO administration is defending itself—and the people—if it opposes or resists an extra 10 million jobs in the new economy within the framework of globalization.

For within globalization's logic—as defined by liberalization, deregulation, privatization and level playing field—what we are bound to witness in the coming months and years is the further decimation of jobs in industry and agriculture.

Within this year (2004), all investments and export agreements designed to level down tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade, in and out of the house, are scheduled to take full effect. These are the Asean Free Trade Area and Apec Free Trade Zone, in addition to the covenants of the World Trade Organization. The executive of the 147-nation trade talks in Geneva, focused on further agriculture liberalization, would also have a critical impact.

Some quarters sense in the excess of Angelo de la Cruz a backbone capable of defying the Constitution of the Walling. Unfortunately, that backbone is nowhere evident in the economic field. The State of the Nation Address was entirely in keeping with the pro-globalization views enshrined.

The proposed neo-child policy is outside globalization's framework, but essentially it is making less an attempt to shift the blame for poverty from globalization as a causative factor. There is no other way of explaining globalization, as the one which some Southeast Asian countries—notably Malaysia and Thailand—have taken.

—ANTONIO KATIPUNAN,
Unit 201 Union Square Condominium,
141 15th Avenue,
Cubao, Quezon City

LETTERS

RP should improve English proficiency

THE EUROPEAN Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines is eager to promote the Philippines as ideally built for information technology-enabled services. But the country's education sector must first hasten to improve its proficiency in the use of the English language. During our business review for 2003, potential investors in the IT field—call centers, business process outsourcing (BPO), software development and back office operations—raised a number of questions on this matter.

Foremost among these is that English must be restored as a primary language if the country wishes to become a major competitor in the IT-enabled services. It's a known fact that proficiency in English is one of the major requirements international clients look for when casting an outsourcing business patron.

An informal canvassing (CT services is the most likely segment where the interest can benefit in the short to medium term. And as the global ICT market continues to grow, we at the EECP are determined to stay involved in the creation of a bridge between the IT outsourcing demand in Europe and the supply side in the Philippines to help the country get a slice of the European ICT market.

Our office formed this direction last year and in the establishment of the European IT Service Center engaged in IT training. It also provides the platform for European SMEs to the IT sector wishing to establish companies in the Philippines.

It is sad to say that the "panel" in education is this over 30-40 years ago has fallen terribly behind. The new administration must address this issue with urgency for the Philippine true third advantage over other Asian countries.

—JOHN SCHUMACHER,
executive vice president,
European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines,
11/F Saac Building,
Rizal Drive cor. 30th St.,
Bonifacio Global City,
Taguig City

Leno forgot past record holders

JAY LENO's snide remark about our troops breaking the 100-meter dash record may be funny to those who come from the "home of the brave." But he could have been more tasteful if he remembered the previous record holders: (1) The American troops pulling out of Somalia in 1993 after Somalis killed 18 US rangers; (2) The American troops withdrawing from Lebanon in 1983 following severe casualties in the US Marines; and (3) The American hostages fleeing Iran in 1981 following an aborted rescue mission. The hostages were forged by the US government into servanthood.

We lost Gen. Wpn. John Paul Kennedy and President George W. Bush is not one of Iraq. The Americans think there's no brave, perhaps, we were the Lord God can count them!

—ERNA ZIMMERMANN,
MPCalgary St.,
Greenhills East,
1556 Mandaluyong City

How about 'pink urinals' for women?

ACCORDING to Maita Vasquez of Mandaluyong City, there is a growing public clamor for the removal of those unsightly and confusing "pink urinals" that the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority installed around the metropolis.

Maybe to appease Vasquez, Pro-Mandaluyong City Mayor Benjamin Abalos Jr. did the right thing in installing the public urinals for men. For one, they help decongest overcrowded comfort rooms in shopping malls. Ian feed clerks and bus attendants.

But why only for men? Why not women's urinals. That way, he cannot be accused of discrimination.

—ELIZABETH DAFFODIL,
92 Paraiso St., Parang,
Marikina City

Malabon residents seek mayor's help against thieves, robbers

WE, residents of Barangay Acacia, Malabon City, are thankful to the city government for the efficient daily collection of garbage and for its continuing efforts to upgrade Tinsel Street and M.H. del Pilar Avenue.

But we also would like to ask the help of Mayor Tito Oreta to stop the high incidence of thefts and robberies in our barangay. Our worst were those in broad daylight. When we reported the case to the barangay, we discovered that we were the fourth victim that day. On Tinsel Street, there was a "hog mauling" incident, in which the victim was a factory worker going home after a hard day's work.

—FELISA MONGCO
AND CONCERNED CITIZENS,
Tinsel Street, Barangay Acacia,
Malabon City

For the President from the CBCP

IN ADDITION to the 10-point agenda enunciated by President Macapagal-Arroyo, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines-Episcopal Commission for Social Action, Justice & Peace, outlines to the Arroyo administration the following recommendations:

- Boldly the lifestyle check campaign, we would like to see the Office of the Ombudsman and the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission no longer suffering from shortage of lawyers and investigators, so that prosecutions and convictions will proceed with dispatch without compromising due process.
- Refrain from legalizing illegal gambling, especially horse-racing betting, especially the illegal ones, for that impoverishes the poor, fuels corruption and weakens morals.
- Assess the impact of the membership of the Philippines in the World Trade Organization—inherited the Filipino people have benefited or lost from trade liberalization, deregulation and privatization.
- Study the planned Charter change—as it is guided by the desire to improve the Filipino's quality of life, or to further liberalize the Philippine economy to surrender to pressures from multinational institutions?
- Judiciously use the P68 billion annual Countryside Development Fund to implement the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program and to complement the human rights victims of the Marcos regime, and the recently removed 27 priests of the core text funds, to ensure that these funds will go where they really need to exclude other names that remain in enemy hands.
- Review the "farmland-at-value" bills. "They may give farmers' access to loans but they could also enable big corporations to reacquire foreclosed lands and accumulate their landholdings.
- Rescind the policy allowing the commercialization of Bt corn in the country in view of the lack of conclusive scientific studies regarding the safety of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) on human health and the environment.
- Review executive Order 270 (National Policy Agenda on Revitalizing Mining to the Philippines) and stop the solicitor general from contesting the Supreme Court decision nullifying the Financial and Technical Assistance Agreements provisions of the Mining Act of 1995. Public interest must never supersede national patrimony and ecological integrity.
- Abolish the purchased power adjustment (PPA) by working government's interests (interests with independent power producers (IPPs). Honestly tell the public the truth of the review of 35 IPP contracts.
- Certify as urgent bills establishing a debt cap, promoting political dynasties, engendering transparency in campaign funds, and professionalizing and regulating legislative lobbying.

The Filipino people have suffered a lot. Momentary relief will not do. Long-lasting solutions are called for. Bahala sa Diyos.

—ARIEL L. ARDAS,
advocacy program coordinator,
National Secretariat
for Social Action-Justice & Peace,
470 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila

A challenge to all OFWs and their children

NOW that Angelo de la Cruz is safe, at last we're done with the hostage crisis—especially the families of overseas Filipino workers—the fears of my father, who are OFWs in Iraq.

My mom told me that on Sept. 11, 1982, during the Iran-Iraq war, in an unknown hospital in Basrah for vacuum are never easier to know about. My mom told me that of neglect; as it was the time of the Iraq's military offensive given priority. My father, a carpenter, was sent to Iraq in March 1983. I was then a 17 year-old, second year high school student.

Parents left no stone unturned to recover the hard reality of his death, and we had to be contented with just bringing his dead body back to them. That would have been impossible, if not for an uncle, who was then with the Air Force. The military helped bring my father's remains home, since then, I have very high regard for the men in uniform.

With no means to pursue my education, I decided to take the entrance examination at the Philippine Military Academy. The PMA was my only hope for a better future. Life was tough inside the academy but I said to myself, I'd rather die than give up. My father's death served as my challenge and inspiration. His letter telling his sons to study hard will forage on the wall of our house. He is dead, but his dreams will continue to live in his family.

I graduated from the PMA and earned a step increment three for me, a seven-year stipend. I finish God I was not blinded by hatred. I entered the PMA in 1988 and graduated in 1992. I am now serving as chief inspector at the Philippine National Police. My mother is still a humble storekeeper in our hometown in Pangasinan and my sister other brothers are all employed in the government.

I sympathize with the family of De la Cruz. I know the pain of losing somebody you depend on so much. It's as if all doors are closing on you. How many OFWs have died in Iraq, in the Middle East or other parts of the world, working to give their families a future?

The most important message I wish to impart to the families of OFWs, especially the children who are lucky to be in school by the blood, sweat and tears of the millions of Angelo de la Cruzes left on their. fighting to survive for their families in the face of all kinds of threats to their lives and security. I beg you to study hard so that when you graduate, you will not be in the ranks of the low's employees but among the leaders. Never yet, study hard, and you will be good to go abroad to work away from your home to help have-not. Only the end fruits of your OFW parents will bear fruit.

And to the OFWs all over the world, to keep on communicating with your kids. Encourage your children to study hard. Be not give in to their whims and caprices, but rather invest in their education.

—ERIC EDGARDO WIBLE,
police chief inspector,
Camp Rafael L. Ileana, Quezon City

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Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Burgonia

DPWH plans to build 'flood-free' schools

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The Department of Public Works and Highways has mapped separate general plans and aid programs to be achieved in Pampanga's rapidly developing coastal towns: flood-free schools.

The design is simple. Each of the proposed 60 school buildings will stand on a concrete stilt for that will be raised to 3.5 meters, a dike-like wall rings the elevated ground.

About 23,000 public elementary students in the project sites of Minalin, Macabebe and Masantol town alone to gain in the effort. Students have been complaining of 20 school days a year due to flooding, it was learned.

The new structures, which will have toilets and water pumps, may serve as evacuation centers in case of severe flooding, according to Emil Sudiacal, chief of the DPWH Mount Pinatubo Emergency Project Management Office.

The plan, worth P799.1 million, came in consideration of the floods that last from two to five months in the three coastal towns. Sudiacal said the government is pushing the Pampanga provincial board on Monday. The DPWH sought the endorsement of the provincial board.

Aside from being flood-prone because they are at the delta on mouth of the Pampanga River where 20 rivers systems in Central Luzon drain, these towns have also been sinking at an average of an inch a year by Sudiacal said.

He said Johns has offered the dyke and transported the flow of floodwaters to the Manila Bay.

Japan has lent loans or various oil plants to infrastructure projects mitigating the effects of lahar and floods in the provinces hit by the 1991 eruptions of Mt. Pinatubo. Nestor Ely Ovalan, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Floods displace 20,000 families

COTABATO CITY—A dozen towns in Maguindanao and three others in North Cotabato have been submerged in floodwater following four days of torrential rains in Central Mindanao.

The light yet continuous rainfall also caused the closure of the Indian-Lebak highway for weeks now.

It has displaced some 20,000 families in South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, Sultan Mastura and Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat, Shariffaguak, Datu Unsay, Datu Abdullah Sangki, Shariffaguak, Datu Unsay, Datu Abdullah Sangki, Shariffaguak, Datu Unsay, Datu Abdullah Sangki

INQUIRER Northern Luzon
Editor Jun Bandayrel
Assoc. Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Dutch, English schoolchildren help fulfill young Aeta's dream

By Allan Macatuno
San Marcelino, Zambales

MILES and oceans away, Dutch and English schoolchildren are joining hands to fulfill the dream of a young Aeta who is strongly beating the odds to become the first midwife of her tribe.

From an upland village at the foot of the Mt. Pinatubo in San Marcelino, Zambales, the story of 23 year-old Gina Dimasi-dimasi has inspired pupils of a Catholic school in England to raise funds and help finance her studies, while students in the Netherlands organized to organize fund-raising activities for her.

Despite the lack of financial means to sustain her education, it was Dimasi-dimasi's determination to finish high school and eventually earn a college degree that has touched the heart of Sarah Jane Salmon, who looked for ways to realize the young Aeta's ambition.

While conducting a medical mission on a remote area of San Marcelino in 2002, Salmon met Dimasi-dimasi, a high school student then.

"Mr. Dimasi-dimasi told us that her dream was to become a midwife but she had no money. I talked with one of her teachers who asked his students to write us story about their dreams," Salmon said.

No hindrance to success

Salmon was moved into tears when she learned that Dimasi-dimasi went to see the bus "Parents have a hindrance to success."

The Aeta girl finished her high school education through the help of her parents, who were tending a farm in their village.

Wearing slippers and clad in a pair of old school uniforms, Dimasi-dimasi had to walk from home to school everyday to attend her classes. It would take her about an hour-walk to reach the school, and she did it during her entire elementary and high school days.

Not minding an empty stomach, Dimasi-dimasi always tried to excel in her studies and even received academic honors.

During rainy days, she and her younger brothers had to ride in a karetela to keep them to school since the Maporaporac River in their village always swelled, submerging the adjacent areas.

"We almost drowned while passing the river because strong current battered and damaged the boat we were riding in," recalled Dimasi-dimasi, the oldest among four children.

Encouraging depression

At 19, Dimasi-dimasi had already learned how to do the traditional tribal midwifery when she joined the Spanish Red Cross, which conducts medical missions in the mountains of Zambales.

"I have always wanted to become a midwife. I would like to be of great help to my community," Dimasi-dimasi said in Filipino.

Volunteer work

She said she voluntarily spent her time participating in various civic projects of the Spanish Red Cross because she wanted to help her fellow Aetas.

Aside from the P200 transportation and food allowance she was receiving from the group, Dimasi-dimasi barely had enough money to spend for the daily needs of her family.

She had also worked as a volunteer health worker for the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines, assisting visiting doctors, nurses and medical students in conducting medical missions in many upland areas.

After finishing high school in 2002, Dimasi-dimasi found herself working as a house helper in Metro Manila. "I badly needed the job to support my parents and younger brothers. That is one thing that I could do to earn a living," she said.

"Life is a symbol of hope and inspiration and it is such a blessing to find someone like her," Salmon said. She believed that Dimasi-dimasi's character would encourage poor people everywhere to strive for a better life.

"In my own country, an area as spoiled. Nobody will die from hunger. The government is always there to help you. When you are sick, the national health department will take care of you. The government provides for schooling. It is a well-organized country," Salmon said.

After settling down in Zambales with her husband Rich and two children in 2002, Salmon lamented that she started to feel depressed.

Overcoming depression

"What depresses me most here is the poverty. I am unable to turn away from it. In the Netherlands, I can switch off the television whenever I see poverty, but here, it is all around me and this is no longer a TV program that I can switch off," she said.

And rather than continue feeling depressed about it, Salmon said herself that she could do something to help them.

She started sharing Dimasi-dimasi's story to close friends and family back in The Netherlands, who also became interested in helping the girl.

"I expressed these feelings and thoughts with my family and friends back home through the newsletter that I write. And I got positive reactions. People wrote back and they wanted to help," Salmon said.

Gary Blanch, Salmon's English friend, also learned of Dimasi-dimasi's situation and soon aimed to do his share in assisting the girl to college.

Salmon said Blanch felt that he was compelled to do something about his bond of the plight of Aeta communities in the Philippines, particularly those that were devastated by the eruption of Pinatubo in 1991.

"Mount is full of enthusiasm about helping Gina and she was of her community," she said.

Sharing the story

Inspired by Dimasi-dimasi's determination, the Englishman shared her story to children around his community in the southern part of the United Kingdom.

Blanch knew that the young girl's "will power" would always motivate children elsewhere to succeed despite all the challenges in their lives, Salmon said.

And Dimasi-dimasi's story did not fail to inspire them children. More than 200 preschool children engaged in various student's schooling by donating at least one pound of their allowances every month. The contributions started last summer before Dimasi-dimasi enrolled to college.

At present, the pupils have collected at least P180,000 to fund will be used to pay for Dimasi-dimasi's school expenses and provide her with daily allowance.

In a small community in Holland, schoolchildren of St. Athelstan School organized various activities to raise funds for Dimasi-dimasi's tuition and school expenses.

Salmon said everybody in that school knows about Dimasi-dimasi's story and an article written in the school's newspaper also featured the "inspiring" life of this girl.

Really amazing

"I was really amazed at how things went on here. I still don't believe that someone as poor as me can still have the opportunity to reach my lifelong dream," Dimasi-dimasi said, expressing her gratitudes to Salmon, who is taking care of her.

"After she was facing challenges in her life, Dimasi-dimasi said she proved hard that sometimes would help her enter college and realize her dreams of becoming a licensed midwife.

"I never lose hope, especially during the toughest moments of my life. I firmly believe that nothing should hinder me from attaining my goal, not even hardship or poverty," she said.

The young Aeta girl from a village that was once covered with lahar is on her first semester at the Olongapo City College. She said the school bus ride became unpleasant for her.

"I feel blessed that many people in the other side of the world are helping me finish school and become a midwife. I thank them for believing in me and I will do my best not to fail any of their expectations," she said.

Dimasi-dimasi also works as a volunteer worker of the Lutan Foundation, a nongovernment organization accredited by Villamor Air Base to help the indigents of Zambales by providing medical assistance, education and livelihood projects.

LUCKY Dimasi-dimasi finds time to get back to her upland village in San Marcelino to inspire and help her fellow Aetas.

Vocas: An alternative art center of the North

By Donna Domenilo
Baguio City

TAKE the flights of a spiral staircase up the La Azotea building on Session Road in Baguio City, and you are transported to a different world.

Filipino sculptor Jose Ayala once called it the ship of Captain Nook because of the sense of fantasy it gives. For many, it is simply a rare space free of noise from the city's traffic and crowd.

The space, "Vocas," is the Victor Oteyza Community Art Space, established in memory of the late Victor Oteyza, one of the Thirteen Modernists in the 1950s.

Last week, the art space was opened to house the creative ventures of the Cordillera and Northern Luzon.

Oteyza and other artists like Fernando Poanga, Vicente Manansala and Cesar Legaspi ushered in Philippine modern art in the country's early years, and were called the "Thirteen Modernists."

Because of the rapport between conservative and modern art, the paintings amount of attention and encouraged by the Arguilla to establish the Philippine Art Gallery (PAG) in the 1960s that aimed to promote modern art.

The Cultural Center of the Philippines continues to give the Thirteen Awards to young artists in honor of these pioneers.

Alternative filmmaker Kidlat Tahimik, a nephew of the late Oteyza, said his uncle was first an engineer at the University of the Philippines before he became interested in modern art.

Oteyza also pioneered radio dramas, such as "Tore ng Tabanan" and "Gulong ng Palad."

"But he was an artist at heart," Tahimik said.

Memorial

Vocas was conceptualized by Tahimik 10 years ago as a memorial to Oteyza. Tahimik said his uncle, an icon of the Ilocos region, a family-owned building, deserved a space, and the idea of converting the building's rooftop into a community art center was born.

Two years ago, Tahimik started building the project, putting in his own tides of alternative architecture.

"I had no formal architectural training. I studied at the 'pahandi-han' or school of architecture. I had my films with no script. But art space was created without any plan, without a blueprint," he said.

Tahimik had to work with available materials, such as pieces of wood, and fit them together, trying not to use one kind over any portions.

If the wood arrangement did not work despite adjustments, the wood will be ripped it and used. He put them back another way until he was satisfied with the shape. "Only then do we bolt and lock the structure [padpad]," he said.

Tahimik said the tool-and-error process was less time-efficient compared with standard architecture, where everything is done according to pre-drafted measurements. But he said the result of the process was the uniqueness of the art space.

'Global village'

The architecture captures a village atmosphere intermingling design of Filipino houses, Spanish architecture, an old Hopee bar, and taverns with rooftop gardens surrounding a plaza to create what Tahimik calls a "global village."

Bricks and wood pieces of all shapes and sizes that suggest another time (sea turtles) or islands are scattered throughout the village and are delightful discoveries as one goes around exploring.

Legs that Tahimik gathered from Baguio's streets after every

THE VICTOR Oteyza Community Art Space gives artists and art lovers a new home in Baguio City.

and recycled as posts spread leafy stems that blend with other plants, giving the plaza an outdoor feel.

At the center of this village is a charming little wooden bridge above a pond of water lilies with an imposing Japanese statue and beside that recycled pond statue.

Vocas also features the most interesting restrooms in town with a unique signage made by artists to form bright and colorful assorted shapes on walls and doors.

Tahimik's son, Kawayan de Guia, and his artist friends keep the place teeming with energy by giving music and providing exhibits in the art gallery.

Veggie route

It must be the search for the ultimate gallows in Tahimik's 24 year to the making. His short Magellan and his slave, Kimpoy de Mabuta, which inspired the gallows-like structure that is now a regular art installation in Vocas.

The restaurant "Le Chef" is a favorite hangout of surprises with playful names ("Back ng Panunuya," "Chili no carne," etc.).

Chefs are of exotic designs and are music complements to the entire scene completed by the view over the city and the changing colors of the city's skyline while eating at the balcony.

"I hope (Vocas would) remain as the new art center of the North," Tahimik said.

Ex-Abu hostage confirms AFP collusion

Front page A1

"strong circumstantial evidence to support the allegation of collusion" and recommended the court-martial of three officers.

As far as Malacañang and the military are concerned, reviving the controversy issue is like beating a dead horse. But, if it is, it appears to be one dead horse that keeps on kicking.

Saying Baesbaos could provide "additional information" on alleged military collusion with the Abu Sayyaf, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada said yesterday he was considering seeking the reopening of a Senate inquiry on this matter.

And authorities should be asked to identify and catch an impostor, Estrada added.

Major contribution

"Mr. Baesa's summary was a major contribution to the criminal case against the perpetrators," Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, a member of the defense committee, said in a telephone interview yesterday.

The controversy over the issue of alleged military-Abu Sayyaf collusion was revived last week when Baesbaos testified before a special court hearing the kidnapping for ransom charges against several detained Abu Sayyaf members.

Prosecutors admit errors

Department of Justice prosecutors quickly but apologetic ally admitted they told reporters, who were not allowed to cover the testimony that Baesbaos had testified that there was "no collusion" between the military and Abu Sayyaf.

A court video later showed that Baesbaos said no such thing when she was asked by defense lawyers if, indeed, there was a conspiracy.

The video showed she never got a chance to answer because the lawyers' repeated questions objections of the defense question.

DOJ prosecutors have admitted they had erred. But they also said that Baesbaos did admit that the testimony of Kismelogher of any conspiracy between the military and the Abu Sayyaf but she said that during a pre-trial meeting with the prosecution.

Bayan, his wife Divine and son BJ, a reporter for Angat, a weekly with New Tribes missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham and Gillian Ateneman Guillermo before, were among the 20 people abducted by the Abu Sayyaf on the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan on May 27, 2001.

The Bayas couple and their son managed to get away when shooting broke out between the disciplined and soldiers, who had captured the hostile at the Zamboanga Regional Hospital in Lantawan, Basilan.

What book says

The escape of the Abu Sayyaf during the Lantawan siege prompted numerous theories that some military officers were in cahoots with the bandits.

Baesbaos was rescued a year later during a military operation in Sumisip, Basilan.

Yesterday, Baesbaos said she was not aware that Bayan had written a book about surviving the hostile ordeal in the Abu Sayyaf-AFP collusion.

SURRENDER. What about other rebels?

RECONCILIATION. Divine Baesbaos

which her husband and Filipino nurse Edilson Ilag were killed.

In a book she wrote about her ordeal, "In the Presence of My Enemies," Baesbaos said she found it odd that the military did not pursue the Abu Sayyaf after they slipped out of the Lantawan hospital.

She also wrote that, while in captivity, she was told that one general wanted to have a 30-per-cent cut of the ransom being demanded by the Abu Sayyaf in exchange for the hostages.

No support

Some of Estrada's colleagues in the Senate were not keen about reviving the hostile inquiry on the Abu Sayyaf-AFP collusion.

Arlene opposition Senators Edgardo Angara and Panfilo Lacson said that the Senate had other more important matters to take up than resurrecting the Lantawan incident.

Biazon and Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. also were not convinced.

Only Minority Leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. was supportive of Estrada's plan but he, too, admitted that he was not certain whether the other senators would support it.

Estrada expressed dismay at what he said was the way the government seemed to have "vanished" the testimony of Baesbaos last week.

"The government is hiding something or they want to eliminate her testimony," Estrada said. "They wanted to prevent her from testifying on what she knew about the alleged collusion."

Estrada said Baesbaos could provide additional information on the allegations given that she was at the center of the hostage drama.

"She has an reason to lie," he added.

Asked whether the Senate should then reopen the inquiry, Estrada said that he would talk first with Magsaysay and Biazon.

But he said he would consider filing a resolution that would reopen the probe.

"We just can't sweep this under the rug," Estrada said.

He said Baesbaos should be invited to the Senate inquiry or a Senate panel could be sent to the United States to get her testimony if not.

Glaring omission

Drilon said Malacañang probably indicated it had no desire to revisit the issue if investigators had no new proof to justify the reopening of the case.

In a briefing, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said that the Senate and the Armed Forces had already made a separate investigation and "nothing there to raise evidence, if it had to have some behind."

Bunye said dropping the issue was like "beating a dead horse." "Let's stop reading to horses," Bunye said.

Bunye was inundated by questions about how President Macapagal-Arroyo could make a glaring mistake when she issued a statement thanking Baesbaos for rescuing the military based solely on press reports.

2nd time

"The was the second time that Mrs. Arroyo appeared to have acted with unseemly haste on an unverified information in less than a month.

Last month, the she prematurely told the family of Filipino truck driver Angelo de la Cruz that he had been released by his kidnappers.

"I think she is something we could have lobbied. The important thing is the President has acknowledged the presence and participation and coverage of Mrs. Gracia. Burnham as far as pursuing the fight against terrorism," Bunye said. "The President has expressed what she needs to express, we can afford to meet important things now."

No sanctions

Bunye said Ms. Arroyo was unlikely to take action against the DOJ prosecutors who fed the media a wrong information about Baesbaos's testimony.

He denied insinuations that Ms. Arroyo was in a rush to clear the military.

"The President made the statement based on information available at the time. We responded based on our belief that the reports were credible," said Bunye. *With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

2 more JI suspects behind LRT bombings arrested

Front page A1

"Nike and Amir were identified to be responsible for the bombing in the Light Rail Transit in Manila and a bus in Quezon City in 2000," Lt. Col. Bienvenido Dasmal, an Army spokesman, was quoted by Reuters as saying.

The two men allegedly had prepared the bombs along with senior Indonesian JI leaders, including Mukhaer Hamdan. Mukhaer, Dulmatin (a.k.a. Joko Pitono) and Amir had been killed by security forces in Muntinlupa last October three months after escaping from Camp Crame.

Police intelligence sources said Reuters that Nike and Amir belonged to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's special operations group headed by Abdullah Tholib, who was arrested in Davao by the City while trying to board a domestic flight to Manila in May 2003.

"The arrest of the two MILF members will help complete the jigsaw puzzle we are trying to put together in the investigation of the blind Day bombings in 2000," said a police intelligence official, who asked not to be identified.

Only 2 still at large

Only two among 19 suspects in the series of bomb attacks in Metro Manila and Mindanao—remain at large.

Hambali was arrested in Thailand last year, while Malaysian resident Faiz Bafadam Bafana was detained in Cambodia. Mukhaer, Dulmatin and Abdul, who was killed by security forces in Malabon last October three after escaping from Camp Crame.

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The blind Day bombings were closely coordinated with the Christmas Eve bombings in Indonesia in 2000, an indication that JI had planned, funded and carried out the attacks in the two Southeast Asian countries, the police intelligence official said.

Dasmal said Nike and Amir had been brought to Manila for investigation and would join Yassir at a maximum detention center inside the PNP headquarters in Camp Crame.

Yassir had earlier pleaded guilty to the charge that he helped plan the Blind Day bombings, but later retracted his confession.

MILF ties

The MILF has been fighting government troops in Mindanao, demanding independence for Muslim areas. The rebel group, which is holding peace talks with the government, has publicly rejected terrorism and has denied allegations that it shelters JI members.

Washington has expressed deep concern over the reported presence of JI-training camps in Central Mindanao and has deployed American counterterrorism troops to train and arm Filipino soldiers battling Moro militants and other insurgents.

Some 50 JI militants may be in Mindanao now, according to a police intelligence official.

The Jemaah Islamiyah, which has been linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terror network, is suspected of planning to establish a pan-Islamic state across Southeast Asia, including the Philippines.

JI militants have been blamed for several bomb plots and attacks across the region, including the Dec. 12, 2002 bombings in Bali, Indonesia, that killed 202 people.

Terror threats in US

PNP Director General Victor Ermita and Director Gen. Robert Mueller, the FBI's chief, said there had been no recent report of a serious threat posed by JI militants in the country following Wednesday's decision to raise the terror alert to the United States.

On Sunday, US officials announced that terrorists had put under surveillance the New York Stock Exchange and The Citigroup Center in Manhattan, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank buildings in Washington and Prudential Financial Inc.'s headquarters in Newark.

US officials sealed off some streets in New York, put hundreds of employees in Washington through extra security checks, and added concrete barricades and a heavily armed presence in Newark, New Jersey, in response to the terrorists threat, issued at Homeland Alerts Defense and the restrictions would remain in effect Tuesday and would be reviewed daily. (See related story in The World, *Page A13.)*

AF's quiet is RP

"We're quite keen in the Philippines," Drilon told reporters. "If they (Americans) have a terror alert because they're getting some threats, the chances are different here. It's because we know that because they've got, you're targets as well."

He said there was no need to raise the terror alert level in the country, adding security measures and intelligence gathering were sufficient to thwart any terrorist attack.

Even so, Malacañang urged Filipinos abroad, particularly those in the United States, to take the necessary precautions against a terror attack.

"The Philippine government does not take this news threat lightly," presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said in a statement. "All Filipinos abroad are best forewarned to undertake extra precautions for their safety and that of their families."

Be careful

For its part, the Department of Foreign Affairs urged Filipinos in the US Base Limit not to take for granted the warning the terror alert level by Washington.

"It normally tend to be complacent after several alert warnings were issued and then nothing happened. There's a danger in being complacent," Assistant Foreign Secretary for American Affairs Ariel Abadilla told reporters.

"They should help their eyes and ears open. They should be careful in their comings and goings. They should be aware of the guidelines issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency," Abadilla added. *With reports by Christian V. Esguerra, Jaime Laboy-Arellano, Antonio Arcing Bendero, AP and AFP*

Candles burn bright for final surgery of RP twins in New York

Front page A1

CANDLES of hope and prayers are kept burning in the family home in Silay City, Negros Occidental of 22-month-old twin brothers as doctors in the Children's Hospital at Montefiore in New York perform today the fourth and possibly the final surgery to separate Clarence and Carl.

DIRECTOR of Pediatric Neurosurgery, Dr. James Goodrich, last February's case on illustration to explain why it would take two more surgeries to do a delicate operation to separate twins.

and—and alarmingly delicate surgery to separate them.

Erolinda left for New York to be with her eldest daughter Arlene, the twins' mother, in the critical operation at the Children's Hospital at Montefiore. She was accompanied by Philippine Airlines Foundation executive director Ma Corazon Ilustrisimo.

"Please pray for the successful separation of the twins," the Aguirre family has appealed to relatives and neighbors in Barangay Nabitasan in Silay, 14 km south of here.

Undying faith

Before she left, Erolinda had instructed her other children, Andy and Anela, to keep the candle lighted near the pictures of the twins on the altar. This represents the undying faith of Erolinda and her husband Fernando, 56, that eventually, Carl and Clarence will survive. Some, especially walking toward them.

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Arlene was working as a nurse at a company in Manila when she gave birth to Carl and Clarence at the Philippine General Hospital on April 21, 2002. She found it difficult to raise the twins alone in Manila.

Chain of hope

She gave up her job and went home to Silay on Aug. 17, 2002, almost a year old and severely malnourished. They were also suffering from chronic septicemia pneumonia.

Inemesa got in touch with Dotty Goddard Urrutia, Connecticut pregnancy counselor of Dr. Child Henry Hunter Foundation, who sought the help of Dr. James Goodrich director of the Children's Hospital in Montefiore, New York.

Prayers

In September last year, Arlene and the twins left for New York where Carl and Clarence would undergo a series of operations.

Then are scheduled to undergo extensive a daylong operation that would be the final step to their dream of being separate lives.

During the previous surgeries, Erolinda had said she offered a dozen eggs at the Cariñosa Monastery in Bacolod for the doctor's success. Her family also gathered in front of the altar to pray.

"We can't do much for them out here, but we can continue to hope and pray," she had said.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2004

E-mail: [illegible]

Desk Editor: Conner B. Bibe, Zeze G. Dipasupil

End near for 'ugly' PNP posts

By Tina G. Santos

THE NATIONAL Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) has started tearing down police outposts with an average appearance, as well as those considered eyesores or obstructions to traffic.

First to go was the Police Community Precinct (PCP) 3 at the Balintawak Interchange in the Quezon City, which reportedly clogs normal traffic near the South Luzon Expressway.

NCRPO chief Director Edgardo de Leon said the demolition of police outposts was part of the streamlining of the functions of personnel in the metropolis.

"Police personnel of decommissioned PCPs would be deployed in the streets for visibility patrol and patrol operations and to augment existing police services there Monday," De Leon said.

Police offices affected

Also affected by the streamlining are 732 barangay desk administrative units. They will be replaced by one multimedia personnel after they are assigned to patrol duty.

"The NCRPO offices' areas of jurisdiction overlap; have resulted in the duplication of tasks among its officers," De Leon said.

He added, "This is the NCRPO's contribution to government efforts to increase the efficient delivery of public services. This is one sector we cannot trim down and increase manpower to improve public service," he added.

To ensure that security in the communities is not compromised, De Leon said he already drafted plans for a "crack-down" which would send policemen from decommissioned PCPs to civilian barangay detachments.

Under the "crack down," each barangay patrol unit would be placed under the supervision of a policeman.

A good cop is (not) hard to find

By Christian V. Esguerra and Lira del Puerto

THE POLICEMAN who single-handedly shot dead three armed bus robbers in Mandaluyong City last Saturday was honored by his colleagues yesterday.

There was no dearth of courage in SPO1 Charlito Corpuz, when he shot it out with three armed men who tried to rob a passenger bus near the eastbound.

But for daring feat, the plucky Corpuz was rewarded with a promotion to SPO2, medals of merit, and a cash gift from the Filipino-Chinese community.

Philippine National Police chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. personally congratulated Corpuz yesterday morning at the De Ocampo Memorial Hospital in Mandaluyong, where he is confined for a gunshot wound in the right hand.

"He is proof that there are still good cops out there," Ebdane said.

Corpuz's acts of heroism could not have come at a better time.

Only recently, four policemen, —one from the Makati City police and three from the Pasay City force—were caught in the act of dumping the body of an alleged victim of summary execution in a Calamba, Laguna subdivision.

Last month, a Pasay City policeman was also caught on camera stuffing shabu inside a police precinct's comfort room.

Corpuz, who was on his way to work at the time of the holdup, was outnumbered when he engaged the robbers in a brief shootout outside a packed JEEPNEY passenger bus along Edsa.

"He was alone but it didn't matter that he was outmanned," Ebdane said of Corpuz. "He showed strength under pressure. He didn't lose heart."

Sr. Supt. Ericson Velasquez, Mandaluyong police chief said Corpuz' act of gallantry was a morale booster for the force.

"I feel very proud of him. It really shows that policemen are still willing to lay down their lives when necessary," Velasquez said.

At the Mandaluyong Police headquarters, policemen were upbeat.

"It's good news, indeed," said Insp. Arturo Ibong, the city's chief investigator. "This is a boost of super cops." he could not refrain himself from saying.

The investigator was referring to two previous incidents involving Mandaluyong policemen: SPO1 Virgilio Reyes, who shot and killed three bus robbers on the South Super Highway, and PO1 Ingmar Atienza, a senior who had jumped off a bus to run after a suspect who tried to rob a woman along Edsa.

Atienza got an on-the-spot promotion.

Corpuz, who was with his girlfriend when he spotted the attempted holdup, could have just avoided a confrontation with the robbers, but chose to run after the suspects' getaway vehicle.

"This makes me very proud of our men," the police officer added.

"A day had been removed from Corpuz' hand, but a boss had been bestowed," Velasquez said. "Otherwise, he's fine."

FEATHERED FRIEND
Malabon Zoo owner Minnie Tengco plays with the 1-year-old swan named Sister. The swan is a favorite attraction at the zoo. CHRISTOPHER

2 bank robbers identified

By Margaux C. Ortiz

SECURITY guards of the Banco de Oro branch at the Old Southmall have identified two of the six masked 'al-saqueros behind Monday's robbery, police said.

Sifting through police photos, the watchmen said the two suspects resembled two other men involved in gold bank robberies in Quezon City and Parañaque, said city police chief Supt. Reynaldo Gomez.

However, Gomez withheld the names of the suspects "so as not to jeopardize ongoing operations."

The police chief said the suspects could either be part of the Nilsan Pinoy or Hooglin Groups, which have been implicated in the Presidential Bank heist in Parañaque City in February 2003 and the Banco De Oro bank robbery in Quezon City last April.

Saner modus operandi

"The suspects who robbed Southmall's Banco de Oro on Monday used the groups' behind the Parañaque and Quezon City robberies, but the saner modus operandi," Gomez said.

Five security guards were shot and wounded by the suspects who forcibly took two duffel bags containing an undisclosed amount of cash.

In the Quezon City bank, gunmen held up a Banco de Oro removed two robbed outside the saner building of the SSS City in North Edsa.

On the video band, robbers destroyed security cameras before the Presidential Bank in August in February 2003.

Lack of alternate route delays Tullahan bridge repairs

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE ABSENCE of an acceptable alternate route for motorists has been delaying the rehabilitation of the Tullahan Bridge in Valenzuela City.

Mayor Sherwin Gatchalian said he wanted the project on Marulas Bridge to start soon, but not without a clear alternate route.

Pushing through with the construction without an alternate route would shut down many businesses in the city he explained.

There is a parallel road in Sampaloc, Malabon City but it is also undergoing repair. Motorists would also have a difficult time if they would be rerouted to M.H. Del Pilar, where a road reconstruction is also ongoing.

The third possible route going through Paso De Blas to the unpopulated because it is under repair.

Work on these roads is expected to be completed in a few more months, city planners and project evaluation head Alberto Asuncion told the barangay.

Mayor Gatchalian's request

SUSPECT Philippe Manalo is escorted out of the Manila Regional Trial Court after his arraignment for the rape and murder of bank teller Caroline Castro was rescheduled.

Flood, traffic problems on 4 mayors' agenda

By Edson Castro Tandoc Jr.

TOGETHER in Iloilo. Or so mayors in northern Metro Manila hope.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the mayors of Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela (Camanava) are preparing for a summit to coordinate plans to solve flood, traffic and garbage problems in their areas.

Common ground

"Because we have interrelated problems, we should also have common programs," Caloocan City Mayor Enrico Echiverri told the Inquirer yesterday.

No date yet but it was his idea to hold a Camanava summit with the MMDA.

The summit is, however, still on the drawing board, although Echiverri said they would try to hold it starting next week.

The other congressional districts in Caloocan City but the summit also concerns Balintawak, Valenzuela City, Malabon City and Navotas to Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue and J.P. Rizal avenues going to Manila.

Some creeks and other drainage systems also run across some or all of the three cities and one town, making flooding caused by high tides a common problem.

Coordinated effort

Thus, Echiverri said projects like cleaning up rivers or improving the traffic situation should be a coordinated effort to ensure that these turn out well.

And while Navotas Mayor Tobias Reynald Tiangco said they did not have any problem with garbage disposal, he was optimistic the summit would help in the town's efforts to alleviate flooding.

Unlike its three neighbor cities, Navotas has its own controlled garbage facility.

Tiangco added that the MMDA would also help in the funding of localized flood control projects in residents in northern Metro Manila under the Camanava Flood Control Project, which will be completed only after four years.

For his part, Valenzuela Mayor Sherwin Gatchalian said he was planning to discuss with the other north Metro Manila mayors the repair or replacement of the Tullahan River bridge on Macarthur Highway.

No acceptable route

Many on the bridge had been dared for last year but this has been delayed because of the lack or absence of an acceptable alternate route for affected vehicles.

The Tullahan bridge connects the Camanava area to Bulacan and is a vital link for industries in the southern metropolis localities.

Many cargo from Central and Northern Luzon pass over the Tullahan bridge.

Malabon mall hit by hourlong fire

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

TWO EMPLOYEES, a policeman and a fireman were slightly injured, while more than P2.5 million worth of property was lost after a fire razed a big department store in Malabon City yesterday afternoon.

The fire started about 2 p.m. inside the air-duct room of four J Mall in Barangay Tañong. The room served as the control office for the exhaust of the concessioners at the ground floor, according to Investigator SPO2 Ben Pangan.

Thick smoke sent shoppers and employees inside the five-story building running in panic.

A Pizza Hut employee said the heavens that he did not have any explosion or a like sound.

Inspector Angeles Leyba of the Malabon City police suffered cuts in the head after shards of glass fell on him. PO2 Manuel Gabriel sustained wounds to his hand, Pangan added.

Two employees were also injured but I and were brought to the Tondo General Hospital.

Pangan said at least six stalls on the building's left wing were damaged.

The fire was put under control an hour later, while investigators tried to determine its cause.

Security was tight after the fire and guards were rudely prevented reporters from getting close to the building.

Mall guards refused to provide information about the fire.

Nearby residents said the mall was owned by former mayor Lazaro Enriquez.

But Pangan identified the building manager as one Alberto Enriquez.

Castro rape-slay case hits new snag

By Tarra Y. Quismundo

THE PROSECUTION of the rape accused in the rape-slay of bank teller Caroline Castro could not proceed as of yet.

One of the accused is still at large, and while the other may already be in custody he has not been able to enter a plea.

The prosecution has to wait some more to present their case against Philippe Manalo, who was arrested the same day Castro was found naked and stabbed to death inside her condominium in Makati, Manila, on May 12.

He was scheduled to be arraigned yesterday to enter his plea of either guilty or not guilty to charges lodged against him.

Only after the arraignment could a trial push through.

The court, meanwhile, has issued a hold departure order against Reba Reyes to prevent him from leaving the country. Manalo had tagged Reyes in the rape-slay, and the court has issued a warrant for his arrest a week ago.

Manalo's lawyer, Augusto Jimenez, asked the court for more time for him to review the resolution of the City Prosecutor's Office of Manila indicting his client for Castro's death.

As the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 53, where Manalo and Reyes have trial for rape with homicide charges, Jimenez asked the court to give his client an extension before his entire his plea.

"We only received the resolution this morning. We need time to review it," said Jimenez, referring Judge Reynaldo Alhambra before a jam-packed courtroom.

The prosecution, including public lawyer Jacqueline Ann R. and Lorna Espinosa, who represents Castro's family, initially disagreed with the request, saying Manalo and his lawyer took part in the preliminary investigation.

But "to satisfy" the defense's appeal, Alhambra granted the request and rescheduled the arraignment a week later, on Aug. 10.

PNP dared to arrest 'Baron' slay suspect

By Christian V. Esguerra

RETIRED Chief Supt. Ramon Montaño yesterday dared his former boss, outgoing Philippine National Police chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., to arrest Supt. Rafael Cardenas, prime suspect in the killing of Aaron Cervantes three years ago to prove that the alleged mastermind of the murder was "untouchable."

"If they are so good, how come they have not been able to arrest him?" Montaño said, referring to Ebdane and other top generals of the PNP.

Montaño challenged Ebdane to make Cardenas's arrest his personal crusade before the PNP chief retires at the end of the year.

"He wants it to the family of the victim, justice must be served," he told the newsmen.

The rebel duo Cardenas's alleged henchmen were convicted for the murder in 2001 of Cervantes, self-styled spokesman of the Young Officers Union.

Former Master Sergeant Joseph Montalan, the confessed gunman, was sentenced to life imprisonment, while rebels Eduardo Torres and Junior Cardenas each got eight to 14 years in jail.

Montaño said it was his unsupported hostility when Ebdane and the 114,000-strong PNP were unable to catch the suspect despite their vast resources.

Cardenas remains at large because he is part of the so-called dispute of Philippine Military Academy graduates at the national police, Montaño claimed.

This should also explain why he failed to arrest Cardenas while he headed Task Force Getaway, a special police unit President Arroyo created after he had formed to respond to a request by the victim's family.

Montaño said arresting Cardenas was difficult, allegedly because of the lack of support from Malacañang and the PNP. Ebdane abolished the task force earlier this year, a few months after he retired in December, Montaño added.

Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, PNP spokesperson, however, said he had no knowledge of the task force's abolition.

He also doubted if Ebdane could abolish the body since it was created by the Office of the President.

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Christmas face-off for O'Neal, Bryant

O'NEAL

BRYANT

NEW YORK—Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant will probably not exchange Christmas cards, but they will face off against each other for the first time on Christmas Day as the Staples Center.

The National Basketball Association released its 2004-05 schedule on Monday and made the season's most highly anticipated matchup—O'Neal and the Miami Heat against his former team, the Los Angeles Lakers—the second half of a Christmas Day doubleheader.

O'Neal dismantled a trade from the Lakers after coach Phil Jackson was fired in June.

Bryant complained that Bryant bore the team for shooting too much and not getting his teammates involved enough, but Lakers owner Jerry Buss sided with his All-Star guard.

After O'Neal was traded to the Heat by Lamar Odom, Caron Butler, Brian Grant and a first-round pick last month, the Lakers re-signed Bryant to a $136-million contract.

However, the holiday meeting could be spoiled if Bryant is sentenced of felony sexual assault in an August trial.

O'Neal will make his debut with the Heat on Nov. 3 against the New Jersey Nets at the Continental Airlines Arena.

His home debut for Miami comes on Nov. 4 against LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers.

The defending champion Detroit Pistons started the dismantling of the Lakers, beating them in five games in the NBA Finals.

Detroit will play its season opener on Tuesday Nov. 2—the opening night of the season.

After receiving their championship rings, the Pistons will host the Boston Celtics, who acquired star guard Tony Delk and from the Orlando Magic in the offseason.

Detroit will also play the Indiana Pacers in the first Christmas Day game.

NBA China Games 2004, which features Yao Ming and the Rockets taking on Sacramento in Shanghai on Oct. 14 and in Beijing on Oct. 17, highlight the league's preseason schedule, which will be released on Aug. 4. AFP

Woods, Kuehne win in 'Bridges'

RANCHO SANTA FE, California—Hank Kuehne salvaged an embarrassing night off the tee with two birdies. But par for Tiger Woods took over from there.

Woods blistered a 14-on within 20 feet (7.5 meters) for an eagle at the par-5 14th (last) capped a great comeback and gave him and Kuehne a 2 and 1 victory Monday night in the "Battle at the Bridges."

The made-for-TV exhibition was supposed to be about power, and John Daly did not disappoint by winning three of the four long drive contests. But it ultimately came down to the most reliable club in anyone's bag—the putter.

Daly and Hunters champion Phil Mickelson led 2-up by most of the match until Woods started the rally with a birdie on the 13th, and Kuehne finally got in the game with birdie putts of 8 and 12 feet (2.4 and 3.6 m) on the next two holes to give them a 1-up lead and send them to a victory. AP

FAREWELL, SMARTY JONES

Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes winner Smarty Jones retires from racing because of bone bruises in all four hoofs. The discovery came after the horse was diagnosed for a bruised front left hoof that had trainer John Servis to scratch the 3-year-old from next month's Pennsylvania Derby.

Busted knee sidelines star

A WEEK after Ateneo's Larry Fonacier ended his UAAP season due to a knee injury, Adamson's Rumil Tugapa suffered the same fate, tearing both his anterior cruciate ligament and medial collateral ligament last Saturday.

Tugapa, Adamson's 24-year-old starting point guard, will be out for the season.

Dr. George Carino, who performed Fonacier's operation, will also attend to Tugapa.

Tugapa, who was reportedly distraught over the news, has been averaging 6.6 points and 7.2 rebounds, leading Adamson to a share of fourth place with University of the East and University of Santo Tomas at 7-3.

Meanwhile, Ateneo coordinator Ace Sadiri is counseling referee Jess Quiazon for his phantom "no-calling bad-calls which influenced the Fil-Oil game."

The Eagles beat the Bulldogs, 86-85, to overcome after a split by FEU's Dan Salon off a last-second foul slapped on NU's Edwin Asoro. Jeannette OC Ryan

Golf fund-raiser slated

THE LONG-RUNNING Angat Pearl invitational golf tournament tees off Friday at the Wack Wack golf course hoping to raise funds for various charitable projects.

Tournament chair Bert Lina and Rotary FIC Mollet "Bimbo" Salazar said beneficiaries will be the Rotary Foundation, the Rotary Club of Ortigas SE District 3780 and its Reforestation and the Community Water of Tagbilaran.

The first tee for foursomes is the major sponsor. Hole sponsors are the JG Summit Petrochemical Corp., Friends of Mother Salazar and Kendall Philippines.

ABN-AMRO Bank, Allied Bank, Blackrock, Manila Polytechnic Rural Bank, International Container Terminal Services Inc., Pang Xing Industrial/Phils. Inc., PR Hegde and Professional Consultants, LG Aldecoa Chemicals, Chemist Development Bank, Manila Bank and Sun Miguel Corp. are hole sponsors.

Mitsubishi Motors Phils. just signed Lancer as hole-in-one prize on No. 11.

For inquiries, call the Global Sports Management and Marketing Corp. at 433-8702 and 431-1940.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2004
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SPORTS
Editor: Lilia Tedoyo S. Melendres

BASKETBALL: MIL Game Sports TV
Housing Loan

Hot Altas seek 7th win in row vs Dolphins

THE UNIVERSITY of Perpetual Help Altas hardly merited a second look during the pre-season even though they have an intact lineup.

The San Pedro-based squad, last year's ninth-seeder, however, has stirred much interest after storming to the top spot at the end of the first round of the NCAA senior basketball tournament.

"We didn't really expect to be where we are now," said Perpetual coach Chiendet. "We just tried to win every game. We worked hard, and I think we were much better than the other teams. Because they say if you work hard, eventually you deserve it. Buti will be with you as well."

"Maybe we surprised the other teams, or maybe not. But I'd rather focus on my team right now. We've been practicing harder, we're really doing everything."

The Altas are on a six-game roll, its only defeat coming in the opener against Jose Rizal. They hope to extend the streak at 2 p.m. today as they take off the second round against the Philippine Christian U Dolphins (5-4) at the Rizal stadium.

The Mapua Cardinals, who trail only second-seeded San Beda Red Lions (6-3) in the other senior match at 4 p.m.

Perpetual, which has never won the title since it joined the league, has been leaning on league-leading scorer Ivy Javier (13.4 ppg) and sophomores Hadzpaw Jee and Khel Rios. Rookie Ground Romero, nephew of former Olympian Orly Romero, has also been a big factor.

"It's really the attitude of the players that has changed," said Chiendet. "They don't seem to lose and they don't want to stop losing."

PCU, tied at fourth with San Beda, will be led by seniors Robert Sison and sophomores Jason Castro, Ian Castrillo and Ramon Rotaja Jr.

San Beda, which boasted to Mapua at the end of its five-round campaign, hopes to get even with the help of Jeff Bonifero, Arpat Escalera, Jerome Sarenas and Ronnie Bagbas.

Joemin de Peña

JOE provides the ball against JMU's MacDonald Santos

FG bankrolls training of 345 athletes

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ARROYO

MOLINA performs the freestyle.

COUNTDOWN TO ATHENS

Pinoy swimmers take plunge for new marks

By Lorenzo Z. Mangaoil, Contributor

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Japanese boys bomb RP nine

JOHAN'S Shogo Shimadzuhara breaks the tag of RP first baseman Jonathan Chein in yesterday's lopsided match.

MOST Philippines ran into early misfortune and got smothered by powerhouse Japan, 19-0, yesterday at the start of the 58th Asia-Pacific Zone Petty Baseball Championship at the Rizal Memorial Baseball Field.

Entertained favorite Chinese Taipei opened its campaign also with flourish by humbling South Korea, 12-2, a duel that seems most serving as the regional qualifier for the Petty World Series in Pennsylvania.

Shogo Shimadzuhara tore into Philippine hurlers to a row before Yoshiaki Kajiwara of the team with his superb form at the mound.

Kaja opened the Japanese scoring spree with a three-run homer in left field at the bottom of the third inning. Yuichi Shiraishi...

...summit through with two RBIs. Shiraishi did as the shooters from Okinawa used his 4-0 start.

Nine runs in the second frame and three more in the fourth forced RP crew skipper at 11-0. The Japanese also pounded the hurlers this inning, bruised in the fifth, covering eight-score runs.

RP pitcher Juan Gonzalez Angeles, Angeles, who was hit in the jaw by a Matsumoto liner, was rushed to the Manila Sanitarium for check-up. Incidentally, Angeles was just one of three people hit by balls.

GMA: Salvage Olympic coverage

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE NEGOTIATIONS is making a last-ditch effort to save the country's Olympics coverage.

Sources said no less than President Municipal Arroyo has directed all efforts to bring the screen to the Athens Games "free" on Filipinos. The government of the country pays the $1.2 million debt that MBN-4, the government station, owes the international Olympic Committee.

The President met with budget secretary Emilia Boncodin, SSS-4 officials Mia Garcia and Tim Orbos and Socsksargen Rep. Manuel Pacquiao yesterday at Malacañang to draft a letter of appeal to the IOC.

The same sources said "chances are good" that the country will get full coverage of the Games, which will run from Aug. 13 to 29, because the IOC "has been very accommodating."

The negotiations are also trying to restrict piracy in the meeting, a deal the government recognizes the debts incurred by MBN-4. So cover the Athens Games, the IOC requires $1.2 million more.

"The government is optimistic that we can settle amicably with the IOC," said Orbos, who is helping up with the negotiations. "We're hoping that we'll be able to meet the Aug. 9 deadline.

Pacquiao's call and those will be a conference call with IOC officials anytime this week.

SPORTSWATCH

Qatar pins 7th loss on RP–Cebuana Lhuillier

DOHA — The Philippines ended its third-level slide in the 2004 Asian Cup football championships as it absorbed its seventh loss in as many matches, 4-0 to the world's highest ranking Qatar team. Qatar had a strong goal rattle four straight replies against a team unrecognized made by Fardan Mohamed in the 4th minute of the match. Mohamed scored in the 11 minute, 35-0, at the end of the first quarter. In the second quarter, the home-crafts had RP Cebuana Lhuillier thrown down the dribble but quarts, 24-10, but Philippines' Jeff Cariaso scored a goal to make it 44 (28 and 29 for the Filipinos. The Filipinos came on Qatar than 67-17 on an 15 1 found in the first quarter, three more in 3:01. Successive returns by Jim Filipinos — a layup by Glen Pingris and a three-point shot by Magsumbol — in the ensuing days shortest the fiery side. The Filipinos were led by Cruz 17, Medrano, 11, and Magsumbol with 10 points. Cruz also had 10 rebounds. Qatar improved to a perfect 8-0 with a nice record, declining Australia, which finished second with a 6-1 slate, same as Canada.

Hot start for Bibat in Petro Cup elims

ORCHID — Mayor-candidate area court par 17 and Nelson's Langer layout yesterday to break his lead for the Philippine Golf Association the opening round of the Petro-Canada's Petro Cup golf tournament slated Aug. 19-21 at the tropical golf club course in Indonesia. Jhett Nagaraan, who along with two others have been ousted in the RP squad for the annual event also known as the Southeast Asian Golf Team Championship, actually volunteered on the way with a 71 one-stroke at 216-36 after posting the first day with a one-under-par 71. Nagaraan takes up to Chang Carlos. The other seeded bets are Roberto Bumacder, and representational amateur champion on and 200. Open titlist Jun Bibat, Bumacder settled for a 73, while Bibat strung glad for a 75. Dave Bartolo, makes a 73 while Jay Bayron and Nagaraan Sangil and earn of the Samsung Lhuillier team Justin Said. The Cambodia's Regent Sangaon remains the Philippine Southeast Asian Golf Association.

Balbuar Beatty, ESC–Cavitis catch PAF fivs

BALUBAR Beatty and ESC-Cavite battled their respective duels Monday to share the top spot with Philippine Air Force in the PB Electric Supply Cup basketball tournament at the ESC gym. Cavite-bay Mayor-candidate ESC-Cavite captain-opponent Mary Rod Bal, 6-6, 6-0, striker Louie Mangubat. Balbuar Beatty squad outshoot Homer Saguro, 10-10. for their second straight victories in the tournament which is home of sportsmen-businessman Benny Lopez by and organized by PBEX Executive Vice President Ricardo Chua. Both teams are expected to be playing PTE, 25-15, in the other game. The PAF'S Battle of Lawyer Raymund Dy Cruz and coach Manny Bautista jumped to a 20-10 halftime lead and never looked back. Competition continues today with the Force (2-0) facing the 25 at 4 p.m. Mayor Jim Clemente ESC-Cavite taking on (0-0) 11 a.m. (0-one) '89, rookie big with SF Law (0-1. Navy-Air Force (0-1) against (1-0) and the 25 (0-0).

Santillan leaves for OPBF defense

MEKONG Divided and Pacific Boxing Federation another smiles tonight champ Ben "Dynamite" Santillan will defend his OPBF featherweight title against Rio 130 Jaime Manzanares on Saturday at the Professional Gym in Cebu, Japan. The Bohol boxer, Cebu-based Santillan will be pitted in the earth Japan top-ky campaign Pan "Wonder" Sakai, Indonesian Ali Rozie, Rozie and Mahmoudgo Anna Pacio, Jaime training jockey in the fight's preliminaries. Santillan, Pacio, Manzanares, Rozie,

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2004 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

Lito Riedl D. Mirasol
Assistant Editor Corrie S. Madrona

Dell PowerEdge 1750

PLDT's 6-month profit soars to P12B

By Clarissa S. Batino

TELECOM giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. yesterday announced a first-half net income of P12 billion, up 373 percent from P3.6 billion a year ago and exceeded the P11.2-billion net profit for the whole of 2003.

PLDT credited its strong performance to the sustained strength of the wireless business, more stable fixed-line operations and promising overseas ventures including said call centers.

PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan said that with the record-breaking first-semester performance, the company has raised its profit target this year to P22 billion from P18 billion, the bulk of which would still come from its wholly owned subsidiary, Smart Communications Inc.

PLDT president Napoleon Nazareno said the inbound gains would continue "to drive and ease the market" as a way of ensuring "boundless growth." Pangilinan added that PLDT "does not ruminate the concept of (market) saturation."

"We are relentlessly innovating and offering products significant to Filipinos. We will push the envelope and be continuously revisiting business models and offering innovative products," Nazareno said.

Pangilinan said PLDT's retiring strategy would allow it to pay at least 15 percent on dividends to common shareholders by the first half of 2005.

Smart posted a net profit of P11.6 billion in the first six months of 2004, nearly double the P6.3 billion in the first half of 2003, as subscribers, including 588, 87 Text users, grew to 16.1 million or almost 60 percent of the mobile phone market.

"The May elections provided access boost and gave that, we expect the third and fourth quarters to remain more closely the first year performance," Nazareno said.

During the second quarter, PLDT's net income reached P6.8 billion, up from P6.24 billion in the first three months. Smart contributed P6.41 billion from April to June against P5.11 billion in January to March.

The landline business contributed P587 million while the information and communications unit called eMERT brought in about P93 million during the first six months. eMERT owns two call centers and will open another the year to bring its call center seats to more than 2,000 by the end of 2004.

Consolidated revenue for the first half of this year rose by 10 percent to P53.8 billion from P48.2 billion while operating expenses went up by only 4 percent to P33.85 billion from almost P32 billion a year ago.

Of the total sales in the first half, P10.9 billion came from Smart, P23.1 billion from fixed-line operations, and P1.1 billion from eMERT.

This year, PLDT has set consolidated provisions for losses or job cuts unlike in the first half of 2003 when its P6.1 billion net income was eroded substantially to P1.4 billion due to provisioning.

(CONTD)

Currencies

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 55.861 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 3, 2004

¥ 110.91 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 3, 2004

GOLD: $390.90 -3.10 -.02
per ounce/Hong Kong, Aug. 3, 2004

August 3, 2004 Country	Unit	Peso Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.02810	1.00000	35.5830
Japan	Yen	0.00258	0.09200	11.3350
United Kingdom	Pound	0.01619	0.58000	61.7377
Hongkong	Dollar	0.00636	0.22609	7.9416
Taiwan	Yuan	0.00846	0.30100	33.2229
Canada	Dollar	0.02163	0.77000	51.5481
Singapore	Dollar	0.01671	0.59500	23.5486
Switzerland	Franc	0.02253	0.80200	44.3940
Australia	Dollar	0.02013	0.71700	49.6462
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.00741	0.26400	134.8107
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.00749	0.26660	13.4858
Thailand	Baht	0.00702	0.25000	142.3320
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.00003	0.00110	0.0407
Kuwait	Dinar	0.09219	3.28110	1.3671
UAE	Dirham	0.00765	0.27240	130.7520
Euro	Euro	0.03408	1.21350	47.1749
Argentina	Peso	0.01010	0.35970	99.1773
Brazil	Real	0.01110	0.39530	90.0541
Denmark	Krone	0.00449	0.15980	222.6141
India	Rupee	0.00598	0.21300	167.1831
Philippines	Peso	1.00000	35.60000	1.0000
New Zealand	Dollar	0.01810	0.64450	55.2392
Norway	Krone	0.00412	0.14670	242.4676
Pakistan	Rupee	0.00167	0.05950	598.3193
Sweden	Krona	0.00381	0.13570	262.4908
South Africa	Rand	0.00384	0.13680	260.3070
Korea	Won	0.00002	0.00080	1,249.9000
Slovenia	Tolar	0.00016	0.00570	7,024.5614
Czech	Koruna	0.00094	0.03340	1,064.9641
Syria	Pound	0.00055	0.01940	1,829.8969
Lebanon	Pound	0.00018	0.00650	5,553.8462
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.00044	0.01550	2,296.7742

Stock Market

Shares close 0.11% lower

(See stock market report on Page B4)

Banco de Oro profit up 23%

BANCO De Oro Universal Bank, the banking arm of retail magnate Henry Sy, reported a 23-percent rise in net profit to P825 million in the first half of the year from a year ago on higher interest income.

BDO corporate information officer Nestor Sanchez yesterday told the Philippine Stock Exchange the increase was due to the 28-percent improvement in net interest income to P2.25bill. from from P1.76 billion in 2003.

"This is attributable to healthy growth in loans or funding sources and the loan and investment portfolios," Sanchez said.

Non-interest income declined by 26 percent to P1.02 billion due to lower trading gains.

Operating expenses, on the other hand, declined by 6 percent to P2.13 billion from a year ago.

"The decrease in operating expenses is primarily due to non-recurring costs related to integration expenses for the Equitable Banking Corp. merger," Sanchez said.

The bank's total resources fell P 648.4 billion as of end-June, rising by 15 percent from a year ago.

Deposits increased by 19 percent to P516.9 billion while loans payable expanded by P10.6 billion to P21.2 billion. The increase in borrowings was due to the $100 million bi-annual notes issued in October 2003.

The bank's net loans stood at P269 billion, up by 9.8 percent from a year ago while capital funds increased to P73.6 billion primarily due to retained earnings.

Meanwhile, BDO's branch network reached 178, complemented by 281 automated teller machines.

For the full year, BDO expects net profit to rise by about 25 percent to P1.4 billion from a year ago as mortgage interest earnings. BDO president Nestor Tan earlier said that while growth would likely be flat in the first semester due to election related uncertainties, earnings would pick up in the second half.

The bank's bid to buy the 19-percent unclaiming stake held by the state-owned pension fund Social Security System in Equitable PCI Bank is still pending in court litigation. Marie P. Hamada

Investment Rates

Market 1 3-Aug-04	Market 1 2-Aug-04
1 Month	1.4063	1.4000
3 Months	1.3938	1.3900
6 Months	1.3906	1.3900
1 Year	1.3906	1.3900
2 Years	1.3906	1.3900
3 Years	11.1406	11.1406
4 Years	11.1406	11.1406
5 Years	11.1406	11.1406
7 Years	11.1406	11.1406
10 Years	11.1406	11.1406
15 Years	11.1406	11.1406
20 Years	11.1406	11.1406
25 Years	11.1406	11.1406

Gov't to review tax perks of ecozone firms

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE GOVERNMENT's economic team will review the tax incentives enjoyed by firms registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza) for possible reductions or withdrawal of some of them due to concerns on the country's fiscal problems.

An official from the Department of Finance said the Investment Development Budget Coordination Committee, the agency tasked to set economic policies and programs, might eventually subject the perks enjoyed by Peza locators to changes in compliance with the government's agenda of consolidating its fiscal incentives.

Currently, the economic team has included the fiscal incentives rationalization program (FIRP) in the government's revenue enhancement measures, which are intended to help meet the budget deficit and wipe it out by 2009. The program, however, is currently focused on the incentives that are granted by special laws and excludes those granted by Peza.

"Peza has its own law, and the ongoing review only covers the incentives given under special laws. But eventually, we may also look into the incentives by Peza," Finance Undersecretary Cesar Tancuil.

Companies registered with Peza are exempted from various taxes, and are only required to pay 5 percent gross income tax. The tax perks are intended to attract companies to the various economic zones nationwide. Peza locators, however, are required to dedicate at least 70 percent of their production for the export market.

In the ongoing review of the FIRP, economic managers are proposing that all fiscal incentives currently granted under different special laws be consolidated into a single law for easier administration. The passage of the law is also expected to watch by the industry

(CONTD)

DOF to review Pagcor finances

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance will look into the books of state-owned Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) to check on its system of generating and handling revenue, and to determine how the gaming firm can help in solving the country's budget problems.

Finance Secretary Jesus Antonio said the DOF was set to conduct a study on Pagcor's finances because President Macapagal-Arroyo insisted to find out whether Pagcor was earning enough for the government.

"Specifically, the President wants to find out whether the revenue generated by Pagcor is at par with what the counterparts in other countries are earning," Antonio said in a statement.

Since Pagcor is a revenue-earning government firm, it should do something to help in the government's efforts to address the country's various fiscal problems, she said.

The budget deficit is expected to reach P185.8 billion by year-end. The government is targeting to cap it next by 2005.

Malacañang recently signed an executive order transferring Pagcor from the supervision of the Office of the President to that of the DOF.

Now that Pagcor is under its supervision, the finance department will be setting revenue targets for the gaming firm, as it does for the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs. Under the DOF, Pagcor is seen to perform the function of a major revenue contributor to the government.

Speaking held in an earlier press briefing that the DOF would help Pagcor improve its financial performance and increase its contributions to the national government. Development seminar and consultation services, such as Pagcor, are required by law to remit 50 percent of their net income to the state coffers in the form of dividends.

In 2003, Pagcor remitted 39 billion to the government, ranking it the third largest contributing government-owned agencies after the BIR and the BOC.

Placing Pagcor under the DOF is part of the government's streamlining program.

KING JAMES AUCTION
AUCTION DATE: August 8, 2004 (SUNDAY) 10:00 AM
INSPECTION DATES: August 5 to 7, 2004 from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
GENERATORS, EQUIPMENT
ELECTRONICS
VEHICLES
P 5,000
AUCTION

DTI seen proposing changes in BOT law

By Russell W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has formed a group to study proposed amendments to the Build-Operate-Transfer law of 1994 or Republic Act No. 7718 and its implementing rules.

Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima yesterday said these might be a need to amend the BOT law in order to stimulate its provisions.

Purisima said a revision was being made to find out if amendments to the law's implementing rules would be enough to do the job.

"The President, in her 10-point agenda, underscored the positive alternative infrastructure reforms in the agriculture, education, transport, information and communications technology, power and water sectors," he said.

"However, the government's limited resources fall short of the huge investment requirements for infrastructure," he added. "Of the required $4 billion to $5 billion annual investments for infrastructure development, our government [only has] $1 billion a year."

The first BOT law, RA No. 6957, was enacted in 1990 and brought into the local power sector investments amounting to $2.865 billion.

RA No. 7718 later amended the original law to increase private-sector participation in infrastructure. In the five years up to 1999, a total of $15.35 billion in private investment was made in the power, transport, water, information and communication technology and property development.

Phone maker reaching out to ARMM's youth

COMMO CITY—Giant phone manufacturer Nokia, through its Make a Connection Program, has tied up with the Gawad Kalinga Foundation and the Xavier Ateneo Foundation for Charitable Activities Inc.—Mission in Enterprise Development (XFACM MDI) for a program that aimed to uplift the lives of at least 60 indigenous youths in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

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Leadership

The program, involving community-based sustainable livelihood projects, targets out-of-school youths in its main beneficiaries.

Under the project, Nokia and its partners hope to build their beneficiaries' self-confidence by helping them "understand and appreciate themselves better as individuals and as members of a community with distinct cultural identity."

MEMBERS of the Parent-and-Indigenous Youth Organization (Pyo) prepare some of their sanitary offerings.

Prior to the signing of the memorandum of agreement among the participating groups in June, the beneficiaries had already received orientation training and seminars "to develop leadership skills and to foster service orientation among indigenous youth in their community."

Training workshops and seminars on baking, silk screening and farming, fish vending and candle fashioning were given to cluster members of the Pamanuka Indigenous Youth Organization (Piyo) and the Buayan-Kalipo Youth Organization (Bumalo) here.

Sheila Gilpo in Barangay Kalsangan 1 is about five kilometers away from the city. About 188 families live in the area.

Livelihood

Residents of the village press the river daily to get supplies from the city, including bread.

But on June 5, the community had their first taste of baker-baked bread from the first bakery in the area, managed by the youth beneficiaries of the program.

The bakery which is open from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m., is being manned by about 17 baker-beneficiaries.

For the bakery alone, Nokia and its partners shelled out about P64,000.

Ryn Mendo, 33, leader of the Bumalo Ubonesa-Kalipo Youth Organization and one of the bread-eaters, said the program had helped Ubonesa lot.

Mendo's group is participating in the program's oral-farming project.

He said his group had started with 5,000 cashews for fattening. He is estimating to generate about P1 80,000 upon harvest.

Crafts are usually harvested after three to four months.

Realizing dreams

Like other people his age, Mendo, the eldest of seven, said he wishes to get college education someday.

He was hoping that his newly-acquired skills would help him realize that dream.

Myrna Lim, executive director of NDMC MBD said the program was designed to help out-of-school youths to develop to them the "value of transparency, responsibility and accountability." Jessie G. Bonilla, PIA Alimodian Bureau

DIY-ER program benefits juniority's fruitfully baked bread.

FEATURE

AEV profit up 4% in H1

By Elizabeth L. Sandoval

LOGLORD first quarter Equity Ventures said its net profit rose 4 percent to P1.23 billion in the first six months, up from P1.18 billion in the same period last year.

Before interest and taxes, earnings rose 17 percent to P2.0 billion in the first half. This is equivalent to earnings per share of 20 centavos, the company said in a disclosure.

AEV's power group, led by Davao Light & Power Co. and Luzon Hydro Corp., chipped in P552 million to the total earnings.

AEV's banking unit, Cosmobank PMI, chalked in the first half of 2004, which was, however, lower by 37 percent from the same period last year.

The Ultimate Food Group, which is involved in food and food milling businesses, posted the biggest increase in income contribution, it chipped in P211 million, up 196 percent from the level of in the same period last year.

The transport group turned in P102 million, an increase of 16 percent, primarily due to higher revenues. This group is made up of passenger and cargo shipping firm Negros Navigation Corp., formerly PhilAir, and interisland/overseas ferry service operator Supercat Fast Ferry Corp., a joint venture between JFEC and Hong Kong Parkview Company.

Since December 2003, AEV's total assets increased by 4 percent to P59 billion. Consolidated was up by 3 percent to P35 billion.

As of June 30, AEV's cash stood at P2.6 billion (net of for the payment of a cash dividend of 10 centavos per share, or a total of P197 million, in March this year.

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What a Guy

20-year T-bond rate rises to 12.875%

By Michelle V. Rafael

TRADING of long-term government securities was lackluster during yesterday's session, as the low volume of demand forced the 20-year treasury bond rate to rise to 12.875 percent.

The new rate for the 20-year debt paper was 38 basis points higher than the 12.375 percent recorded during its last offering on June 1.

The Bureau of Treasury's auction committee, however, said the 12.875-percent rate was still a reasonable level for the government to accept, considering that the 20-year bonds were already fetching a rate of 13.5 percent in the secondary market.

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

NOT content with keeping the ailing family patriarch away from his wife and the other children, JG Summit Chief Executive Officer Johnson Gokongwei Jr. (better known as

Piltel nets P810M in 1st half

By Clarissa S. Rideno

PILTEL Telephone Corp. has ended the first half with an unaudited net profit of P810 million, a turnaround from net losses of P636 million a year ago, and double the company's P402 million gross forecast for the whole of 2004.

Piltel is now looking at a net profit of P1.5 billion to P1.2 billion this year, according to Manuel Pangilinan, chair of Piltel parent firm Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

Piltel credited the stronger-than-expected earnings in the first half to the growing wireless business through its cable brand Talk N' Text. The carrier crossed 3.55 million subscribers as of end-June 2004, 2.21 million a year ago.

Piltel's operating revenue jumped 53 percent to P8 billion from P5.9 billion a year ago. Operating costs eased by 4 percent to P5.9 billion in the first half from P6.1 billion in the first half 2003.

As a result, the company registered P1.2 billion in operating income as of end-June against only P84 million in the first half of 2003.

The company said positive growth in the second quarter from only P6 million in the first three months after a substantial drop in impairment provisions compared to previous years.

Piltel is expected to realize a much higher profit once a revenue-sharing deal with Smart Telecommunications Inc. is finalized in the next 30 days.

Smart got hold of Piltel's revenue from Talk N' Text for allowing the latter access to the Smart network. In the first half, Piltel paid Smart P2.8 billion and kept P2.6 billion for itself.

Sources said the revenue-sharing deal could change to 60:15 in favor of Piltel. This would enable Piltel to post substantial profits and to utilize billions of pesos in tax credits incurred from years of operating in losses.

Napoleon Nazarenus, PLDT president, said that the group was targeting a resolution to determine the appropriate revenue sharing deal.

"We are proud to have achieved our goal of returning Piltel to profit ahead of our original target of mid-2004," said Nazarenus. Other presidents: "The final year-end result is still subject to fluctuations in foreign exchange rates."

Piltel still booked P79 million in losses due to fluctuations in the foreign exchange rate. A debt swap with Smart had made the latter its biggest creditor, holding P289 million of Piltel's P417 million restructured debt.

Eventually, Smart would own 92 percent of Piltel. Nazarenus said that by the third quarter of the year, Piltel's earnings would be part of PLDT's consolidated financials.

"There could be phases and moments with the Piltel account," said Pangilinan. "But the impact is such as not to see Smart should be wound."

Piltel lost billions in pesos since 1997 when the Asian crisis thus melted its dollar debt aggravated worsening problems in operations.

The company failed to meet rules in previous wireless technology that did not offer text messaging, forcing it to shift to the same GSM system used by its competitors.

Piltel said that 47 percent of its revenues came from Talk N' Text, courtesy of Smart's GSM network. Piltel continues to serve 46,703 landline subscribers as of end-June.

While its mobile subscribers grew, Piltel spent less for marketing and promotions. Marketing expenses fell 10 percent to P650 million from P991 million due to lower discounts and commissions.

Depreciation dropped 11 percent to P320 million, while other operating costs declined to P1.2 billion from P1.6 billion a year ago.

Management fees, however, increased by 30 percent to P497 million. These are payments related to outsourcing arrangements with PLDT.

By September, Smart would convert all of its Piltel convertible preferred shares to own 47 percent of Piltel. This would be followed by the purchase of 767 million common shares equivalent to about 45 percent.

Piltel has forecast a P402 million net income this year on revenues of P5.79 billion. Profits are originally projected to increase to P739 million next year and to P1.48 billion in 2006.

But with the strong second quarter performance, Piltel would have to revisit its financial outlook starting this year, according to Pangilinan.

Ginebra Q2 net earnings up 17%

GINEBRA San Miguel Inc. (GSMI) yesterday announced that its net earnings in the second quarter rose 17 percent to P534 million from P457.8 million in the same period last year.

In a disclosure, GSMI said its net profits had also increased by 5 percent to P954 million in the first six months from last year.

Sales in the domestic and international markets buoyed the second quarter performance of GSMI, a subsidiary of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp.

In the first quarter of 2004, GSMI posted net earnings of P420 million.

Operating income rose 4 percent to P1.47 billion in the first half from last year. Export volumes also soared 12,000 percent in the first half, with 1.1 million cases of hard liquor sold to other countries from January to June from just 48,000 cases a year earlier.

This growth rate is consistent with GSMI's export performance last year. For the whole of 2003, GSMI registered an 886-percent increase in exports, hauling $67,000 more from $50,000 in 2002.

GSMI is also pursuing a regional expansion strategy to tap further markets.

The company is currently working on potential joint ventures in Thailand and Vietnam, after seeing high growth rates in the hard liquor markets there.

GSMI will also use the excess capacity of San Miguel Corp.'s brewery facilities to produce liquor in identified liquor markets in the region.

"For the remaining part of the year, we expect local volumes to improve ... as we expect to reap benefits from our new market penetration programs and advertising campaigns," said Ernesto Cobangbang Jr., GSMI chair.

SMC also said that the expansion of its 320-percent owned Australian beer brand 1- Stag & Iced Ltd. jumped 29 percent in the first half.

SMC said 1- Stag's sales volume expanded 5 percent during the same period.

San Miguel has facilities in China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Vietnam, Taiwan, and Malaysia.

— Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Ayala Corp. to issue P5B in bonds

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

AYALA Corp. is planning to sell P5 billion worth of bonds through a public offering in exclusive financing and leasing duties.

The country's largest and oldest conglomerate is now seeking the approval of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to register its proposed P5-billion fixed-rate bond offering, which will have a maturity of five years.

In a statement, Ayala also announced that it has just signed a P2.7 billion floating rate note facility agreement with a consortium of local banks to answer the funding requirement and help give the firm flexibility in timing its bond issue.

The short-term notes facility, which will be re-priced quarterly based on Mart 1 rates, will be funded by Banco de Oro Universal Bank/Trust Banking Group/unibank, BPI, China Banking Corp., Equitable PCI Bank/Banking, PNBC and Landbank.

Ayala Corp.'s proposed bond offering has been evaluated and rated by local credit rating agency Philippine Rating Services Corp. or Philratings, an affiliate of Standard and Poor.

Seven finance institutions will manage and manage the proposed bond offering: BDO Capital & Investment Corp., BPI Capital Corp., First Metro Investment Corp., Land Bank of the Philippines, PCI Capital Corp., Standard Chartered Bank and PCIBank.

Analysts said that the proposed bond issue would allow the company to improve its debt profile by shielding itself against foreign exchange fluctuations.

"We view the issuance as a positive development for us ... since this will be used to refinance upcoming maturities," said Abhijit Jain Jr., vice president for research at Philippine Equity Partners Inc. "Also now as well that aside from refinancing existing maturities, there will improve the debt profile of Ayala Corp. since it will lessen their dependence on dollar debts."

Ayala Corp.'s move to raise peso-denominated funds is consistent with its strategy to shift the bulk of its borrowings to local currency.

Ayala Corp. will proceed with the bond offering once it finds the market is ready for a peso issuance of this size, officials said.

The company has about P1.68 billion in undrawn, committed credit facilities which are adequately assets to meeting obligations up to next year.

As to 2003 financial report, Ayala Corp.'s long-term debt at the parent level stood at P7.7 billion. The amount represented P9.45 billion in bank loans maturing up to 2007, and P1.25 billion in syndicated term loans maturing up to 2008.

Long-term debt of its subsidiaries stood at P26.65 billion in 2003, consisting of loans from banks, bonds that are due to 2007 and 2008, fixed rate corporate notes and other dollar-denominated debts.

Total debts of the company and its subsidiaries current portion of $3 billion, stood at P64 billion as of end-2003.

For the remaining part of this year until 2005, Ayala Corp.'s maturing debts stand roughly at $260 million. The amount can be covered by available cash and known credit facilities, officials said. With a report from Reuters

20-year T-bond rate rises to 12.875%

From page B1

percent in the secondary market.

Appetite for the 20-year paper was weak, with lenders snatching only P4 billion worth of bonds with the government's scheduled borrowing of P6.5 billion. The government accepted only P3.39 billion worth of bids to prevent a significant rise in interest rates, as banks sought yields of as high as 13.26 percent.

Yesterday's auction result was a continuation from last Monday's performance of short-term government securities. All treasury bill tenors posted lower rates last Monday, indicating the market's preference for short-term instruments.

"There is not much demand for the 20-year Floods because traders seem for treasury bills," Deputy Treasurer Eduardo Mendiola told reporters in a briefing after the auction.

During last Monday's auction for T-bills, the rate for the benchmark 91-day debt paper fell by 11.6 basis points to 7.122 percent. Rates for the 182- and 364-day bills also declined to 8.168 percent and 9.176 percent, respectively.

The decline in rates last Monday mirrored hopes that interest rates were already headed for a downtrend, but the increase in the 20-year Floods rate yesterday cast doubts on this.

Mendiola said the Treasury's auction results allowed the rate for the 20-year Floods to increase to 12.875 percent because it was still a comfortable level for the government. He added that it would be unreasonable for the government to reject all of the bids.

An SSP official, who requested anonymity, earlier said the Treasury should not adopt the tendency to reject outright all bids for government securities just because the market was seeking higher interest rates. The official said the government's liquidity should also be given a major consideration in deciding whether to accept or reject bids.

Cocktales

From page B1

vested guardian of the visibly billionaire.

Lilia's alpha side

THE BOTTLE to close down Cebu's "skyscraper" king has taken a heavier twist, with no less than the former city of Director-General Lilia de Lima of the Philippine Export Zone Authority being the target of the offending flute.

Cebu Daily Inquirer has found that the former city director has fallen in succession for a whopping 300-container-load of used clothing, Pearl City Manufacturing Corp., had the duty-paid to write De Lima about Pearl City owner losing "declined zero request for monetary arrangement."

Wrote, Pearl City plant manager Horatio Ty reveals to Lilia that the shipment had arrived in Cebu, quoting an alleged statement from an unidentified Peza employee: "...double clearance in lawyer's parlance—about to have a second examination.

Instead of being scared, a screaming De Lima fired off a letter reminding the Chinoy that in 1999, Pearl City had also used De Lima to "help" Peza officials and threatened to file cases against the officials of Pearl City's registration for "illegally bringing out" 102 bales of used clothing out of the Mactan zone.

According to the grapevine, the Pearl City Chinoys found a quicker thing-the-loop pencil, denying that Peza instead reduced the penalty to monetary fine, thus apparently set this done.

"We advised that I will avail (myself) of all legal remedies to seek complete redress from your dastardly act of maligning my reputation," De Lima promised.

Containing container competition

THE APPOINTMENT of Oscar Serilla, the GM of the Mactan-Cebu Authority who is being mooted over to head the powerful Philippine Ports Authority, has been to a tinder point for the ire of the Manila terminal operators now with the Ombudsman.

On the other hand, di Gui, until recently the 1998 general manager, has been transferred to the Sinay Inquirer International Airport to root out personnel headaches as administrator head.

In the meantime, an officer in charge, Brad Santos, has been assigned to keep the PPA seat warm while Serilla obtains, hopefully, a clearance from the Ombudsman.

Gui's woes within the industry is heating the fires of competing business, would put it in direct competition with international Container Terminal Services of Enrique Razon Jr.

Heard through the grapevine

MR. LORDS Legarda seems to make it personally clear that Cebu Governor Pancho Lordes Jr. had requested Rory Isturis as Rory's business deals and Lorenz's political choices are concerned.

The ex-senator has a great quote about her relationship with the ex-governor; unfortunately it is not for publication.

Cocktales, confidential polls@cebu.com or cebu_cube_pub@hotmail.com

DISCLOSURES

BATANGAS PORT Philippines Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Sept. 8, 10 a.m. at the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel. Stockholders of record as of Aug. 11 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

PRIME MEDIA HOLDINGS Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Sept. 28, 8 a.m. at the Fred Ruiz Room, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of Aug. 28 will be entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

SPHERE Holding & Industrial Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Aug. 27, 8 a.m. at its main office in Barangay Ligaan, Rosario, Batangas. Only stockholders of record as of July 31 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Oriental Petroleum and Minerals Corp.** were Jaime Go, Robert Coyiuto Jr., John Gokongwei Jr., Lance Gokongwei, Antonio Borromeo, Patrick Henry Go, Henry Po, Jaime Ledesma, Manuel Tirador Bethencourt Sr.

* * *

GAA Migsui Corp. and **Gimenez San Miguel Inc.** will hold an investors' meeting and Aug. 5, 3:30 p.m. at the executive dining room, 6/F of San Miguel head office complex, Mandaluyong City.

* * *

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. will hold an investors' and analysts' briefing on Aug. 10, 2 p.m. at the Riverside lounge, 14/F of ELJ Communications Center, Quezon City.

* * *

SASMO Hain was elected director of **Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.** while Shigeru Yoshida was appointed advisor to the board. Completed by Maricar D. Sinco, PID Research

Gov't to review . . .

From page B1

number of incentives.

The economic team is also recommending that only one geographical body be tasked to administer all the fiscal incentives. The initial proposal was for the Board of Investments, as an technical agency of the Department of Trade and Industry, to undertake this function.

The government has to rationalize the fiscal incentives available in the country come in the wake of the worsening budget problems, which are feared to plague the government in a fiscal crisis.

Government officials said some incentives have to be withdrawn because they did not successfully boost local industries but only made them dependent on government support.

Economic estimates showed that it has P462 billion in potential revenues from 1999 to 2003 from the granting of various incentives. Fiscal incentives come either in the form of tax exemptions or duty-free importation privileges.

As part of moves to rationalize the incentives, the government is looking at shortening the six-year income tax holiday granted to firms registered with the BOI. The six-year income tax holiday is one of the perks granted by the BOI to encourage the entry of investors into the country.

ENTERTAINMENT

"BABY" stars (clockwise starting from Lea), David Shannon, Agot Isidro, Jett Pangan, Mhercles Lanchangco-Palo and Miguel Faustmann.

Lea wants a baby girl

'Masarap bihisan ang girl. It's like having a doll'

By Marinell R. Cruz

LEA Salonga, who has been married to Chinese-American businessman Robert Chieu for over six months now, would like to start her family with a baby girl.

NO BUDS. "Pregnant" for her new theater role, Lea says that even with motherhood, she would like to keep on working but within selective with her roles.

"Because all of my friends say girls are easier to raise than boys," said Lea, who is on Month 6 on her role in a musical called "Baby." "They mature quicker and are very independent.

"Besides," she added, "masarap bihisan ang girl. It's like having a doll."

Lea's mother, Lipata, agrees. "Based on my experience, baby girls are easier to handle," Mrs. Salonga told Inquirer Entertainment yesterday. "Boys cry a lot. They are more demanding than girls. Girls complain only when they are wet or hungry."

The musical director of "Baby," Jaime Salonga, is Lea's younger brother.

"When Lea and was going to school for the first time, he didn't want to enter the classroom," Mrs. Salonga recalled. "He held on tightly to my shirt and kept crying. I really had to be very patient with him. While Lea, at the age of 4, told me, 'Inner me here, mom, I'll be fine.'

"Here again, I have friends who say girls are so difficult," said Lea. "I guess it could depend. It's God's call."

But she said she and Robert, who were both 32 when they got married last Jan. 15, do not at all feel pressured to have a baby next year, even. They were married at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles, California.

Lea said they are still enjoying their time together.

"My mom had me when she was 33," she said. "And there's also the line that mother who told me not to wait until I'm in my 30s, so it's perfect. I'm in my mid-30s."

Lea said that once motherhood comes, she would like to continue working. "But I'll have to be very selective with my roles."

She said she plans to be "a hands-on mother" and does not want to have a big family. "I want no more than two or three kids," she said.

Lea, who now lives with Robert in Los Angeles, California, said she intends to raise their child in the States. But if Houston Lipata would have her way, she would rather that Lea's child grow up in Manila.

"Filipinos are more respectful of their elders," Mrs. Lipata explained. "They put their respect by kissing their elders' hands and using 'po' and 'opo.'"

"Baby" is the first musical that Lea is doing since she got married. She had a series of shows in the US and also did a commercial for a hair conditioner when she was in Manila last summer.

She said she has been "shamelessly" looking for acting jobs in the States. "Because as everyone, not too many TV shows are existing and very few new ones are coming out," she explained. "I'm just hungry. When we hear that somebody is leaving a show, I tell my agent to try and see if she could get me to sing for it.

"I don't care what it is for. I'm shameless. You can't really be a snob when it comes to things like this, you know. Besides, as TV work is mostly voiceovers these."

"Baby," produced by Atlantis Productions and directed by Bobby Garcia, will run from Aug. 19 to Sept. 5 at the Meralco Theater in Pasig City.

Lea plays Lizzie, a college student in her 20s who finds herself pregnant. Playing her boyfriend is Lea-over Glenn Jarrad nominee David Shannon, husband to "Miss Saigon" star Isa Calzo. Lea herself won an Olivier for her performance in "Miss Saigon" at London's West End.

"This is really interesting," Lea said of her role in "Baby." "In 'Miss Saigon,' although I was with child, you never saw me pregnant. Here, there'll be stages. The musical ends with me giving birth."

Co-starring Lea and David are Agot Isidro, Jett Pangan, Mhercles Lanchangco-Palo and Miguel Faustmann.

Featured in the "Baby" ensemble are Chari Arespacochaga, Colby Asensi, Topper Belingon, Christine Marquez, Jun Oliveros and Bobbie Tinio Jr.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

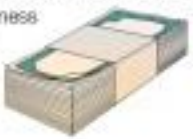
25 LIFESTYLE

2BU! AND CITIBANK TOAST THE YOUNG PINOY ENTREPRENEUR

Color of money

Part 2

Start young! Earn big! That seems to be the slogan of enterprising teenagers who come up with small but bright business ideas that may become tomorrow's San Miguel, Jollibee and Bench



Advice from the money masters

By Gerdonio Faye B. Tordoc
INQ Correspondent

IF MONEY only grew on trees, everything would be easy. But it doesn't, so we all have to be concerned with mundane things like credit loans or monthly allowances.

Contrary to popular belief, though, saving money and making it grow can be almost as enjoyable as spending it all in one day. Money matters from Citibank, the country's largest foreign bank, have rounds of advice on how to manage our cash.

Watch what you buy

Spend some time listing down all your expenses. You might be surprised at how the little things you buy every day all add up. A frappuccino might seem harmless, but getting one before school every day can set you back by P600 a month.

Try saving with drinking coffee/tea during lunch. Drink water much less and is healthier, too. You might also want to use less credit card to track expenses. The monthly statements make it easier for you to study your spending habits, says Citibank Libs branch manager Leah dela Cruz-Jacob.

Minimize your text messages. If you see city your message in person or by using a Post-It note, that would be as much cheaper, and sweeter, too.

Attempt for a carpool. Heard say more than nothing and you are no expensive alone days? Commuting is even cheaper, but are safe. Avoid carrying valuables or dressing too much attention to yourself. All your scrimping and saving will be useless if a sugar-hold up or bust-your-wallet is a pickpocket.

Buy used books and magazines. Or swear the urge to photocopy the whole book. Try leafing through the pages first and then photocopy only the relevant parts. Even better, just borrow the book from the library and take down important points in your notebook. Your save, you improve your memory, too. People tend to remember more when they write it down.

Eat at the school or office cafeteria. Who knows, the food may not be as terrible as you think. But if it is, you might want to bring your own lunch.

Hang out at home. Invite your friends to your place, borrow some DVDs, cook the pantry for some goodies and get set for a movie marathon. If you really want to go out, check the news for free concerts, and your Pinoyalter bulletin board if anyone you know is having a party.

Be a smart shopper

Before you buy anything, make sure you can afford it. Sleep before you spend, not the other way around.

Wait a week or two before making a major purchase. You might realize later on that you really don't need anklets costing P8,000, or comic books that sell at P1,000. Try looking things that approximate in value, like jewelry. Christopher Ting, Citibank Binondo Branch Manager, says eclectic gadgets should be evaluated since their value depreciates fast in just a few months.

Try shopping in department stores like SM and Robinson's. Bitin for what else's. Haven't seen a better time to go sweeps. Your kid's or doctor's chest can yield some treasures too. Eat their long dated to under a bag attendant (but of course, ask their permission first, or you might end up having to buy them a new one!).

Use only paper bills when shopping. Keep the coins in your bag, and put them in a jar where you get home. It automatically leaves you not to spend all your money.

Make money the easy way

Clean out your closet and have a garage sale. Schedule it around the end of the month, when it's payday so people will be more in

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 27)

Shop wisely, scrimp on texting and phone calls, sell what you don't need, live simply

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Young ones in business

Entrepreneurship can be mastered even at a young age

Text and photos by Tammy David and Catherine Young
20/F Correspondents

WITH the dynamism of today's youth, it's not surprising that entrepreneurs are getting younger every year. Whether it's a simple hey, and will venture that may or business classes, or their own cute, pesky short young people are proving that you do not need an MBA to make money.

Whether fresh out of school or still in it, they share one thing in common: the passion for business. Meet three successful young entrepreneurs.

E-mail the authors at tammy.david@gmail.com and cathy.young@abs-cbn.com

Jannice and Janelee Dy

Garments and manufacturing

THEY may only be in their twenties, but sisters Jannice and Janelee have been in the garment business for some time. "We love clothes and decided, 'Why not make money out of it?'" Jannice says. So they opened tasty first unit Sprinkle Shop.

Having their own business did not start easy. They started with their P20,000 savings as capital. Time constraints and inexperience were difficulties they had to overcome. It was the classic dreaming, planning and learning that helps the business going. With the passive business philosophy of "choosing a clothesrack and doing the things that make you and your customers happy," they have continued their business in spite of uncertainties.

The two doing dress hosting their own company is that "You are your own boss, you get to have a flexible time, and we do not have much [no one's] boss," Janelee says.

Their long-term goals include making the complete grow so that it can become a big name in the garments industry. "The future is up to you," Janelee says. "You make the market, you create a need, and you give your best to your customers."

Contact Janelee at 0919-2733947 and Jan at 0917-8330110.

Dominic P. Serquiña

T-shirt printing

FOR some, business savvy may be recessed to economics majors, but not for 20th year Ateneo business major Dominic Serquiña. Sometimes, the key to being successful is a matter of being observant. "I went into that business when I noticed that many UP organizations needed their own t-shirts," he says. "However, they were often not satisfied with the price or the quality so I decided to come up with T-shirts that were of comparable quality but at lower prices and couples this with better attitude. I'm not in this only for [money]."

His T-shirt printing business caters to student organizations in different colleges and universities. Some customers prefer to have the T-shirts packaged with bags, pens and ID lace. He specializes in screen printing, but he also provides his clients with their specific needs. Corporate clients are also welcomed.

Starting with 'practically nothing,' Dominic chose to establish a name that students can trust. He has a satisfaction guarantee and stated formula for referrals. It was also a challenge to balancing his business, academics and homebased chores.

How his efforts later paid off. He plans to acquire his own facilities, hire his own employees, and expand operations to the provinces after graduation. He looks up to John Gokongwei and Tommy Sy, his grandmother Delfina C. Serquiña, and his great grandfather, Lolo Tiago Chamber of Business fame.

Here's truth does a T-shirt business earn? Picture a 25 year-old student who is out for fun, glossy and cocky cool hills, clothes, friends, and even his own money. He also cares for his household expenses and invests in new business ventures.

"I have always believed that people are the best assets in any business," Serquiña says. "Having a very good working relations with my suppliers and I always a very big [premium] on satisfying my customers."

Contact Dominic at 4141125 (landline), 0922-5250000 (cellular) or 0917-8972204.

Noel Sebastian Kalaw Tolentino

Garments, sewing and manufacturing

NOEL Tolentino's parents had asked him, "What would you rather be, the tail of a lion or the head of a rat?" He is a young age, Noel already knew the answer, but was an exact 180 when he started helping out in the family-owned restaurant based in California. From peeling eggs to manning the cash register, Noel really got the hang of work and business.

The blood seemed something more. "I felt that I needed to do an 'extra,' for just a step extra or less an entrepreneur, a person who has various businesses and possibly sells it after," he says.

Later, Noel found his niche in his mom's tailoring business, Fremont Linen and apparel. At 18, he took over from her older brother and did more changes by buying new machines and creating new protocols for employees. Like most young entrepreneurs, he got his capital from "angel investors." "I borrowed from my Mom, my Dad and my Lolo."

Noel saw a potential in turning cities it was a full manufacturing company and tradewise. His first customers were his teachers and schoolmates in high school. How aside from the flagship pool line, including ETB's, Fremont also accommodates custom and uniforms.

Noel's motto is "uniqueness and accountability" which means how he values good communication with people (staff and customers) and responsibility. "I offer lower services, but your good quality in my garments has the service from point with it. I follow a up and calls to the people myself. I do personal touches."

Besides Benson, Noel is busy developing Cambodia for the high-end market, also, he is a senior taking diploma programs at Hanagatsuka in the University of Hyogo and the Pacific.

Contact Noel Sebastian at personal_ns@yahoo.com

Mike Marquez

Fast food & catering

CLICHÉS lovers who want to take a break from the usual fried chicken or lechon meals will be glad to know there's another establishment that offers variety. UPWU Fast Food and Catering is the brainchild of 22-year-old Mike Marquez.

Growing up, Mike had not wanted to be one an entrepreneur. "I believed I needed to take Entrepreneurial Management program [at UAMC] and my grandfather for instilling me ideas of being your own boss," he says.

Mike got into the fast business since his mother is a previous chef "who happens to have 'in the for' recipes for chicken and other Mediterranean and continental dishes." So Mike capitalized on her expertise and named his own.

And like most entrepreneurs, Mike sourced capital from the family due to the lack of financial institutions that give assistance to students who have no credit standing.

Mike has to balance academics and business. "I think it's a trade-off anyone who would believe promises their own business and school if push ever came to shove. The important thing is it can be done, and it feels really good that I am living proof of this!"

Despite the stiff competition, Mike believes he can still excel in the chicken business through "keen observation of customer preferences and competitors' usefulness." He said, "I also believe that as long as we always emphasize quality, we won't be left behind."

WPWU offers Hainy rates for the Filipino palate. Classic chicken dishes are given the spin of the original recipe and the best-selling spicy Chicken Inasal, which, according to Mike, is "so good, it's addictive!!!"

Aside from the all-time favs such as Fried chicken and Chicken Salpicao, WPWU also has seasonal merienda like potato dish and Pinoy Fried Chicken meals on from P59 to P95.

Mike says one lesson he has learned from business is "being able to realize that business is a continuous process and the only way to see it is to triumph over the little hurdles against competitors (direct or indirect) and within yourself as well."

He added to those wishing to venture, "Passing up your own business might seem overwhelming at first, as make sure you can move or lose calculate the risks involved. If you have a good concept and a good business plan, go on there and make a name for yourself!"

WPWU is located at Food Summit, 11th floor, SM Food Ayala Ave.

Michael Ross C. Nisce

Web advertising

BOSS Since has been contributing to the DPWH community the quite some time now. "A friend of mine told me that there was a market that we could tap where only few has just ventured in and that was the DPWH market," he says.

So Since put up an advertising company that focuses on Internet-type online advertising targeting DPWH. Along with Sandro Sandro Dalan, Sam Aura, Leonard Ignacio, Jay Anareng and Hanalie Lim, Boss incorporated and decided to establish Web Advertising, Inc. Their website, www.bossphilippines.ph, was launched last April with an initial capital of P50,000.

Back in his hometown in La Union, his family owns the biggest retail hardware in the region, but he still prefers to put up his own business. "Several thought of myself being an employee and getting my promotion in compensation, but I see myself having employees under me and accepting their resumes. I believe that having my own business, being my own boss is more fulfilling than anything else."

Boss, 19, says he is learning the ropes of the business and other industries. "But the most important things I have learned are the value of money, the value of work and respect. If you don't work, you have no income. Even though I still get an allowance from my parents, I still earn just my work and learn my partners. It's also respect for them that they've also invested time and money in this venture."

What sets their website apart from the others is its search engine which is easier for people to browse. The site also offers flexible products and competitive prices.

Boss will not stop with transforming his plans to venture in the insurance business and provide more jobs. It will take time and more money, but Boss is confident he can overcome these obstacles. "Everything is hard, live with it. There's no rush thing as free lunch. Perseverance, hard work and a noble idea are the keys to success!"

Visit www.bossphilweb.com.ph

Advice from the money masters

Previous page

closed to buy Price then a circle for higher than what you think they're worth, so you can be sure investors can have room to haggle. Tip: Shoes and bags can like Nordstrom, along with stuffed toys.

Put your good grades to use by creating the kids' test sheet, or by applying at one of the many tutorial schools.

Do some buy-and-sell. Where you go to a place with spectacular bargains (like Bangkok), buy modern clothes or watches or sell back home. Make sure though that they don't sell the same thing here for a lower price.

Know where to put your cash

Open a savings account and will earn interest. You don't even have to spend an hours a day chasing the best rates around, however. Just use online savings accounts which you can access from your computer 24/7. You might even want to deposit your money in your parents' savings account, since larger deposits get higher interest rates.

Consider buying an insurance plan. Not only does it help you save money, says Ong, it also serves you against accidents. Don't be intimidated by filling out all those forms; ask your parents to explain the fine print to you.

Start saving now

The earlier you start saving, the better, Citibank branch manager for Cebu, Isidro Co says as one to save for future saving because it usually never happens.

Most people put off saving because they don't think they're getting enough yet. But if you always postpone saving, you will never have more than enough, because you'll get used to spending everything that comes your way.

So matter how small you think your allowance or salary is, always find room to save. The key is to save each month no matter how small, adds Tania Lucarra, Citibank branch manager for the hang.

Find a purpose

Finally, do some long-term planning. Are you planning to retire by 60 a new phone, or a trip to Europe? If you know the reason why you have to save, then it becomes much easier to motivate yourself to actually do it.

Above all, Tibi, Citibank vice president for retail bank marketing, calls this the "3-friend-1-foe." Your acquaintance to you don't feel like you're missing out on life when everybody else is spending like there's no tomorrow. When you actually know why you need money in the first place, saving and making money will stop being chore and start becoming fun. (Happy saving)

E-mail the author at pesobee@hotmail.com

BEST BUDS. Kat and gal Rodrigues with Colin del Mar

NATZUE PARC Drew Arellano and Bianca Gonzalez

GETTING intimate with Iya Villania

VIVAMIX C. Claudia Barretto at 'Tonight Bar'

HOT'S Corina Favorite Celebrity Heart Evangelista and Marco Alcaraz

DIAMOND Charlie Rayos played here

FREE Dara Ibañez (Alaska Party Girl) and Carolyn Eleazar (right)

POND'S white beauty Karel Rodgers

RICO Blanco of Streetwise to sign the license down

PRINCE at ball joy dukes what he does best—capture the crowd.

SWEETEST THANG. Geneva Cruz and KC Montero

VANITY KITS. Vicky Toscano and Bbu Gayanilo's Mang Zubaida

T TIMES TWO. Siblings Cheryl and Chris Tiu

The rock star diet

Let's eat well, work out at the gym and get enough sleep to be able to party "responsibly"

The high life

PARTY all day, party all night. With that kind of a lifestyle, even if you eat all the carbs and proteins you want the next day, you're guaranteed not to gain a single pound of flesh. Plus you'll look gaunt, with cheekbones so prominent you can give Mr. Bebe Pimentel a run for her money.

But for us in a healthy professional (we don't follow the aforementioned advice), we can't do that. In fact, I just finished a day of mechanoterapy (Jean Goh's) and peanut brittle (from Baguio, where else?). My stomach already got inspired when they saw me eat. But that's a different story.

I slept through the whole of Saturday night (living super busy but saved for Inquirer Lifestyle's anniversary events) and missed Karel Obispo's shooting Live (the model for newly-known-as **Bruno Andres**) over Lizzy-mania (Bruno, Lizzy).

After that night, **DJ Ghost** Gebo, according to my hip hop links, is the best hip hop DJ in the world, and he has to happen to be Lizzy's friend. In a newly-wedded Lolit at Redwood (how come nobody knew about this? Paging the Jimbo Lucas...).

Anyway, talking about events that I missed, the Metrosexuals party held recently at Business M, as if Wicho had a whole metrosexuals of each stripe. All of them playing with the same big and hot gadgetry Motorola—the E398.

And why not? I was privy to the launch some months back where DJ god **Paul Sun Hyok** himself endorsed with his E398 before handing it to me on a cute pearl in Miami, the birthplace of the South Beach diet.

Mate music and Meg

When I put my Motorola on phone-on, it's like having your iPod double up as a phone. No surprise that the rock stars present all carried it proudly like a badge of honor.

But the "real" rock stars were the ones who locked themselves inside the private rooms of the Fedex enclave. There, away from the mobbing crowd, they could listen, dance and play... with their E398 phones. As the Smart Addict ad slogan said, "Mas it's personal."

Speaking of which, my personal appearance (top look for in The Meg "Personal Thing" event at Temple Bar. I coral with the Unique makeup queen King Dalusong to look for the occasion gal. Abrgal on chief Shaina Calasanz, soon to be Mrs. Tom Labrador (see Interview and rumors of both, but always ensure this side of town).

I really look up to many song editors inside from Boots, dancers, Ricky Monumento of Chef, Mia Suarez of Lovers, Isabelle Verbeel of Pink, et all. Lest you think it's an easy job talking to some, think of talking to yourself during your good-to-go appearances to confirm and look good with each in your directorings and you'll know what I mean.

Real-life issues

But how do you talk about teen pregnancies without sounding like a preachy prince/pal? How do you tell young people it's not cool to destroy yourself in drugs? (Most skip the alcohol part and just jump straight into crack—cap, quite a sad fact.) How do you communicate quiet confidence without sounding like a pompous self-help guru?

A great deal of subtlety, a quick draw of boundaries and a humongous dosage of useful advice (I don't know if it's making sense—I got this the play on words a mounted. Not to mention having to look forever young. (Don't ask me how old they are. You'll be shocked.)

Aside from all the fluff (cute girl flirt, cute girl that, crush for you, crush for you) I see you one when you flip the coin. Both sides of the coin project their favorable but positive. I. Three young artists hold the responsibility of educating their market without sounding like constipated adults out on an anti-sex campaign of evil-sex agenda.

And they get excited when they visit the campuses. Students relate to them like their older siblings. Hmm... Come to think of it, how come there are no rock's love stage? Ahh, there's FHM. I girls have their photos taken and ask for their autographs. So now, who are the "real" rock stars? Entertainers, the pay is indescribably more than, ah, the priest.

So let's eat as much as we want. Go for a more balanced diet than anything. Dr. Adams is now down and the South Beach girls are actually ancient in studies. After words, let's work it out at the gym and get a healthy dose of sleep (something that I have to do as well) to be able to party "responsibly" whatever we find like it, and not because we are pressured to. Now that's how a real rock star behaves.

And you don't have to be a **Bamboo** or a **Stevejan Boyfie** to be cute. For your friendship (inclusive all of a sudden energy in—well, there's always Red Bull.

RAVED Rykaa's Bo Meg anniversary

HOT and sexy! Aubrey Miles

FEMMOPPY PALS. Vicki Herrera and Ingrid Hoke

SOON TO WED. Flora Celarosa and Tom Labrador

ICON David Ivy, John Bonilla

A-PLUS Aimee Hidalgo

HOTTO HOSTS. Arlene Amarante and Ivy Tecklo

BABIE Aristotle, Waterville LYM owners

HOTTIE TRIO. Aiko Agranti, Bobbie Carmona and Dennis Torregoza

HOWH do Rica gets himself a Mercedes E350.

HOTTO MUSIC. Cindy Cortese and Sarah Meier

HOTTO ROCK. Mark Escueta and Bianca Bates

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2004

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez was the keynote speaker.

Celebrating the media

Inquirer's 'Mediamorphosis' reaffirms that media's inherent powers come with responsibility

Text by Katrina Anne Yap
INQ Correspondent
Photos by Rony Hamilada

MEDIA's power and the consequent responsibility it entails were again reaffirmed during the annual Inquirer seminar series, "Mediamorphosis 2: Diversified Media in Synergy." The seminar this year featured talks on advertising, investigative journalism and independent media.

MEDIA stars (l to r): Katha Tolentino, publisher Chino Francisco Alix and digital filmmaker Khavn de la Cruz

ISLANDS Secretary-president Joy Aldeguer and Love Inc.'s Raul Cesario

BHQTV's John Henry, GMA-7's Howie Severino and PCC's Sheila Coronel

A DIGNIFIED chair Cielo Buenaida

ART ON DISPLAY audience at PICC's Meeting Room 5

Celebrating the media

SUNDAY Inquirer Magazine's Rosario Vera

2BU? SURVEY

What will you do with P100,000?

By Nina Mark M. Salido
2BU Correspondent

ADMIT it, in these times of multi-million-love-and-peace and billionaire-high school dropouts, P100,000 is just loose change. But overall, it's needed, and besides, P100,000 is like a million dollars for chronically broke souls like me—and I know I'm not alone. Check out the things we dished to...

DONNA Rose Legaspi

I'm a big spender and I love playing the "Bills Chain-Me" game! If I have P100,000, I'd have to have myself to dish up 70 percent of it to a high-yielding time deposit or treasury bills. The remaining 30 percent shall go to shopping and eating during lunch breaks (after all, money's around to be spent!). I'll treat my family to a splurge in a scholar-in-our-community food trip (take us to a trip abroad, and my groovy-in-an-Office-of-Student Affairs-T-shirt don't think P100,000 is enough to do all that! Help, seniors!)—Ali A. Dakhel, 24

I will invest it for future needs.—Julie, 24

I would gladly save it for the rainy days—that is, after buying presents for my sister, dad and special girl.—Carlo Martin B. Ibarra, 26

Making my own pasyal-shopping! I'll give the money to my parents and relatives. I like making people happy.—Mads, 23, presently happy

JULIEN Pardo

I'd probably invest it in a high-end digital camcorder to capture precious moments with my family and friends. Such memories come and go so fast that I'd like to treasure them for the generations to come.—Noreen Tabacinguas, 31

Money is a means for a greater end, so I'll buy books from the Bible down to the spy-ed and save the remaining amount to visit and meet a "close friend."—Ian Lacanza, 22

I'd use the money for a one-week vacation in a secluded island with just my boyfriend, and go home looking like a teen goddess!—Mae Mojardo-an, 24

I'll save half of it and spend the other half on a grand fashion binge! Gotta go to my country's new resort like those in Hollywood!—Alfred Tondo, 29

I'll immediately deposit it in the bank.—Angelo, 22

One, wear three, Lola, and my girlfriend Anna out to dinner. P5,000. Then, buy a pair of rubber shoes such as Nike Air Zoom Flight Turbine (P3,000). Finally, buy dollars with the remaining P90,000 and invest it to an IMF. The bond will mature in 2030 as husband and wife.—Julius Favila, 22

I'd travel around the Philippines.—Jennifer Plancenia, 21, San Fernando on top of her list

I invest P20,000 to Bond Treasury Bonds, put P15,000 in an insurance fund and open a high yield savings account for the rest. Also, I'll continue to work hard to run Avon!—Donna Rose Legaspi, 33

JEAN Chua

I'll spend the money on a luxurious vacation.—Ian Galicia, 21

I'll make sure to invest it wisely. P75,000 will go to a five-year investment product that earns high interest, and the other P25,000 I will keep in a savings account, so that I can keep the cash handy in case I decide to go on a trip and reward myself for all the hard work.—Vincent Ang, 28

I'll buy a new pair of shoes plus my three-year-old 3120. The rest will be added to my bank account.—Ria Bonnilleza, 31

I have two investment options. My conservative is to convert the funds to it's dollars and use the fun as a trip next on or for business investments. Fun, I keep it to pocket and place it in retail treasury bonds. That way my principal stays intact while I can use the quarterly interest to shopping sessions.—Cherine Borja, 32

Hmm, I'll buy denims and denims of branded clothes, shoes and accessories. Big mayonnaise.—Marie-Josie Nillos, 23, would love to buy an original DVDrip.

I would likely invest the money in Citibank or probably buy US dollars with it. Unlike Peso, it appreciates. I'd probably go on a shopping spree in MOA. On minimum, I get a windfall, this year I've set a personal goal for myself to save and watching for the end of year, and I plan to make it happen.—Jean Chua, 27

I'll stop working and start my own business.—Harvey Yu, 22

E-mail the author at markmlabi_2bu@yahoo.com.

CHINEE Roxas

Morphed minds

By Rodrigo S. Soto
2BU Correspondent

THE TRUE success of a session rests partly on talk to transcend the boundaries of client-server days, but by the insights their participants gained from them. And so we asked several students and teachers who took part in "Blockconnectivity!" the lessons they had learned.

Communication is not really a negative thing by the same token.—Rosemarie Wee, Assumption Bolinao College

Aware the vision of the Filipino by looking outside.—Hallson Ishida, Assumption

I'm truly encouraged by the speakers' trust in what the youth can do and how much they value the ideas of the youth. I learned that we can make contributions to society even

BERNADINE Wee

RYAN Dee

TARA Calvin

while we're still at school.—Ryan Dilo, UP Diliman

College experience.— Mary Pingol, Trinity College

"The only way to go global is to be you, very local.—Lew Anne Cruz, DLSU

Kaller Tolentin and Kevin de la Cruz took for on the outcomes. Finding the middle ground could be the solution to Philippine media industry.— Jun Jimenez, St. Benedict College

Globalization is not evil. It is a reality that we can take advantage of.—Dave Guerrero, Systemplus

Session gave journalism lessons boundaries. Globe-cover work cross-over borders on the same level. There should be respect for authority and privacy.—Angel Santiago, UST

No culture exists in a vacuum.—Mark de Meza, Sacred Heart College

To be a good communicator, you must enhance your skills and apply them.—Jandee Reyes, San Sebastian College

Strap your boots on, here comes the money!

By Vanessa Andaya Dozor
2BU Correspondent

SO you want your own business. First, ask yourself if this is something you really want to do. Because frankly, it won't be an easy job, and profits do not usually come on the first day or on the first couple of weeks. Sometimes, for months or years even.

I don't mean to deter you away from setting up your dream venture. But we have to lay down the essentials, the most basic of which is this: raising money. Every business needs adequate funding to operate efficiently. Materials have to be purchased, bills, wages and taxes need to be paid, some form of marketing has to be done.

But postpone your vision of a marketing powerhouse for a while and focus on your current limited resources. Put your business to get that headstart, you need to deal from the topping.

If your start-up biz lacks cash, stretch your capital as much as you can and keep your costs to a minimum

Savings and save

That means stretching your capital as much as you can and keeping your costs to a minimum. You might not realize it, but you making every Saturday meal out, the money cash flow appears elusive.

If you can't afford to pay rent for a commercial space, try instance, set up shop at home. Friends and family would be more than glad to help you out and are likely willing to be paid less, as you get to save on overhead. Also, get your business noticed without having to fork out for traditional advertising. Word of mouth is very effective, especially if you do your business well and your products remain quality.

Look within yourself. Do you have enough savings to tide back on money during the period of valuable but unused properties? Have you some money stashed somewhere (such as piggy banks and loose change to rarely used bags) and merely nothing for that rainy day?

And for a decade of lack to do, it is sufficient to finance the needs of the venture? Will you have enough working money left to be able to move around comfortably and breathe easily? A "No" to these questions should create a "Rethink" moment for you.

But if you still think what you have is not enough, then it's time to consider other financial sources. There is a range of lending institutions that are dedicated to small businesses. Consider selling some of the stuff you don't really use but have just lying around to realize cash.

Your credit card may be used for purchases like telephones, a fax machine, personal computers or printers. It's a quick and easy way to make expenses, since most of your bills usually specify which the money was spent. However, the risk is that spending could get out of hand once you start shopping your credit card's power. And you might end up with more debt than you could handle.

Online persuasion

You may also get creative and try the Internet. I recently read about three two girls who were able to amend their high school years to bid glamour. Because they had no other means to get the money, they decided to sell their used textbooks online. Talk about the powers of persuasion!

Infamous "Internet-ist" convict William Wang's three-hit debut was partly due to sympathetic fans who sent him money even on the Net to send him to Bilibid.

The point is, if you're really so